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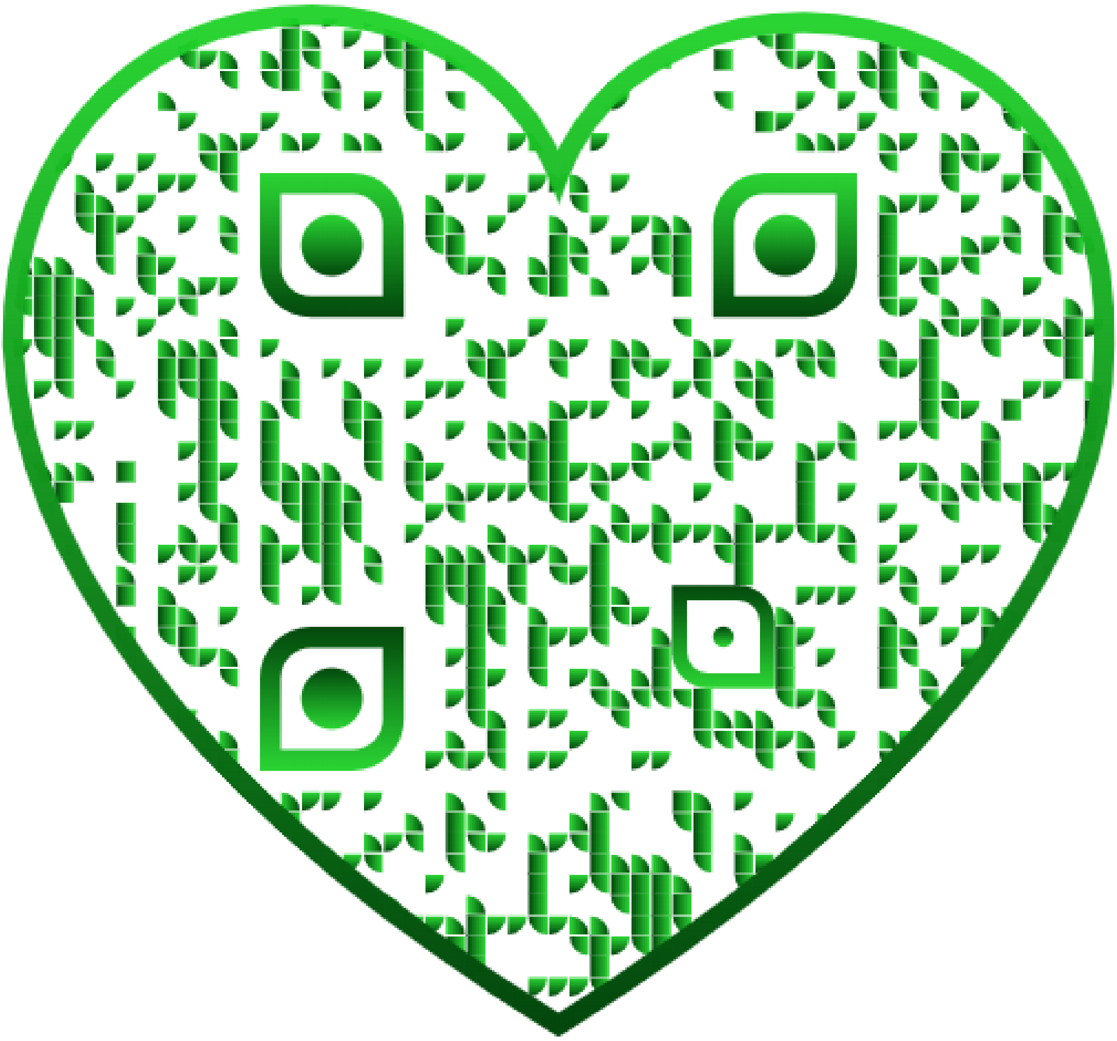

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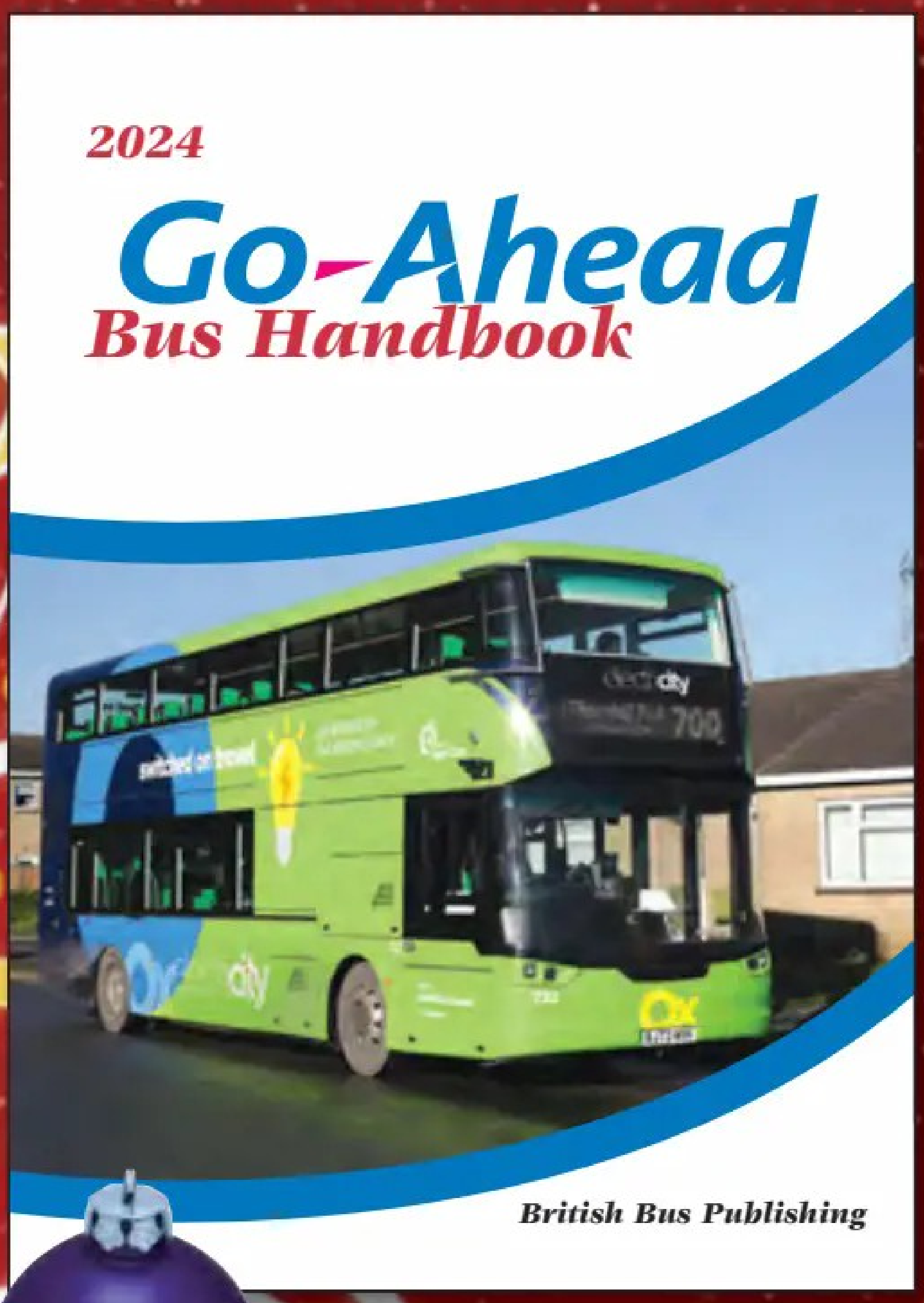
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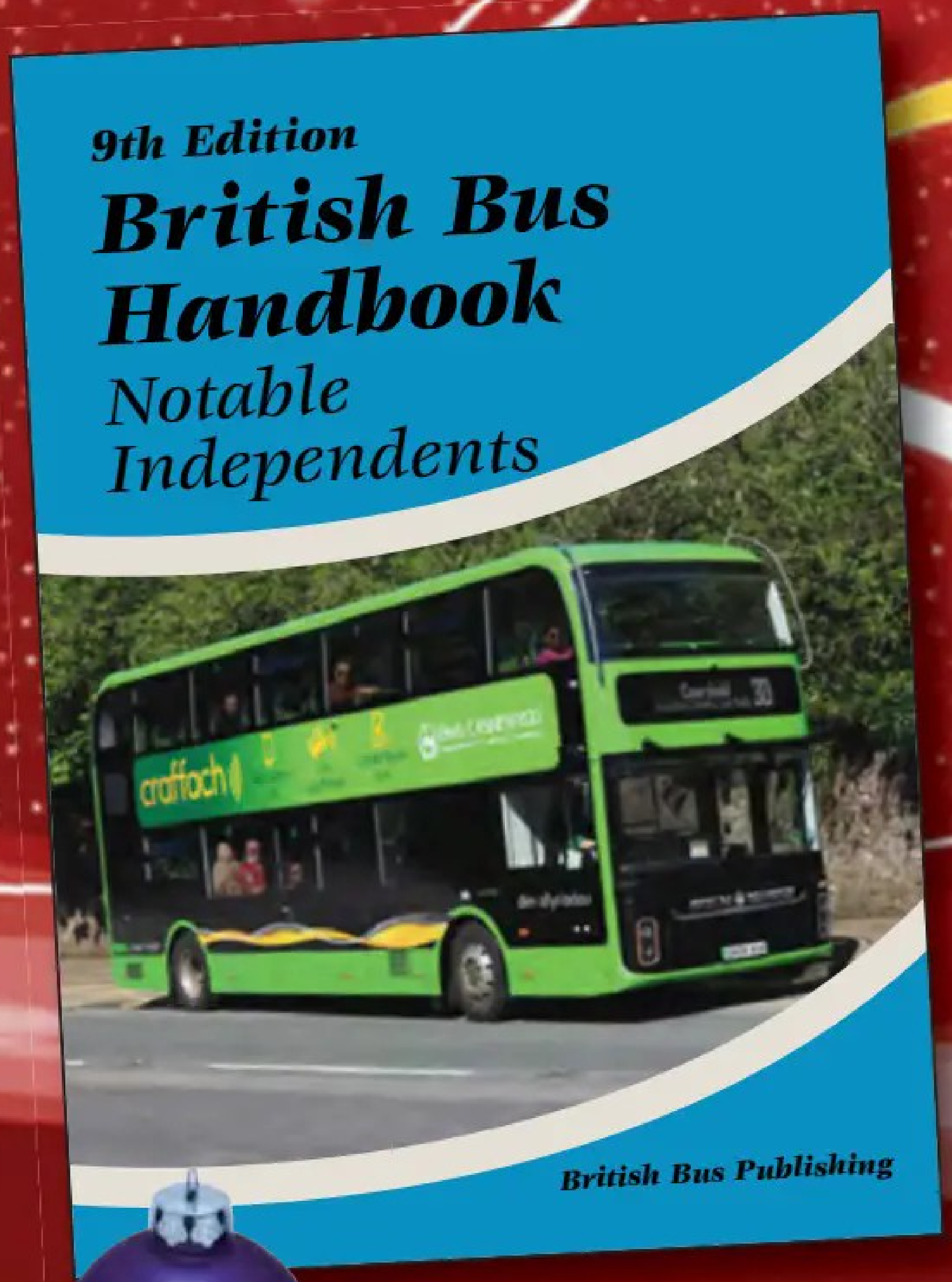
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COMMENT with JAMES DAY

THE EVOLVING COACH MARKET

There was a striking theme which developed as I spoke to coach dealers and manufacturers at Euro Bus Expo 2024 (see page 36). Almost all of them told me that they are experiencing strong sales, often record sales, and many order books are full far into 2025.

The landscape in the coach sector has improved enough for Irizar UK to resume a planned investment in developing a new premises, following a six-year delay. The company had put off the process first due to concerns about the impact of Brexit, and again because of the severe disruption of Covid-19.

Things had been looking bleak for coach operators during the lockdown period. While the bus industry benefitted from extensive support to keep businesses alive, which continued for years after the last lockdown ceased, the coach sector was fortunate to get any support at all beyond furlough payments for staff unable to drive. For many operators, any potential supporting funds were contested by the entire tourism industry, and they were lucky if they were acknowledged as part of it.

With many suppliers celebrating filled order books, the sector could be seen to have recovered. The previously mentioned Irizar UK has confirmed that 2024 will be a record year, and 2025 will be even stronger. TSUK, the dealer for Temsa vehicles, claims to be massively outperforming the rate of Temsa vehicle sales achieved by predecessor Arriva Bus & Coach. Pelican is supplying over 100 electric coaches to Scottish operators with the assistance of ScotZEB funding, something unthinkable a few years ago.

However, the news of Coach Travel Group ordering 42 Scania Touring coaches (see page 28), while more good news for a manufacturer, reminds us of another running theme in the coach sector – operators forming or being absorbed by large groups. There's also been more evidence of the effect of Flixbus' rapid expansion, with Wellglade the latest large bus company to invest in new coaches to support the network (see page seven).

The question is whether the section is recovering, or seeing a revolution in how it operates.

Much has been said about the concerns of small and medium-sized bus operators, or SMEs, as the implementation of franchising schemes across the country draw closer. Such companies form a small but vital part of the make-up of the bus operator landscape. The coach sector, by contrast, is almost entirely made up of SMEs. Even the larger companies, like National Express and Flixbus, run chartered services which have far more in common with bus routes than other coach services, and rely on support from other operators contracted to run their services. Flixbus in particular is a tech company not known for running vehicles itself.

The coach industry is dominated by local, family-run businesses, which have built long-term relationships with repeat holiday customers, provided corporate contracts and offered day trips to theatres and local attractions. Many provide school contracts and occasional bus services, which face the same threats as smaller bus operators should franchising reach their regions. It's very rare in the modern world to see an industry so dominated by local firms, instead of giant companies controlling huge proportions of the market.

With increasing regularity, these companies are being sold to large bus operators, or in the case of Coach Travel Group, joining forces to build their own large players in the market. Many are continuing to use their established brands and identities, but it does feel like the market could be transitioning into something different, dominated by much larger companies with further reaching operating territories. There's a sense that more and more of the traditional operators might have had enough, and decided to leave the industry. This in turn could mean the increasing investment in vehicles is coming from these new capital-rich owners more than traditional operators buying new coaches.

It will certainly be interesting to watch the changing shape of the market over the coming years. It's not only the bus sector seeing transformative change. ■

JOHNSONS
QUALITY COACH TRAVEL
SCANIA
JOHNSONS
YP18 SUX

One of the operators to have joined Coach Travel Group is Johnsons of Henley-in-Arden. The group has announced a new investment in Scania Touring coaches. Another Scania coach, a K410EB4 Interlink (YP18 SUX), moves into an underpass on Birchfield Road, Newtown. RUSSELL YOUNG

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Keeping trolleybuses alive

Nottingham City Transport Yutong E12 217 (YH24 MFK) on Carrington Street in Nottingham. MARK LYONS

Stagecoach Yorkshire has once again liveried a vehicle to wish its customers a Merry Christmas. This year it is Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37453 (YX67 VGP), seen arriving back in to Barnsley on service 95 from Kexborough on Monday, November 25. The bus is set to spend one week at each of the company's five depots. JOHN YOUNG

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM *BUSES*

Merry Christmas from Stagecoach
Barnsley
Darton & Hospital
95
37453
Merry Christmas from
Stagecoach
YX67 VGP

8

Dartford B
fastrack
BN14 CUH

67

Skelmersdale 319
via Neverstitch Road
trainlink
27270
SN65 ODK
quick connections to & from Liverpool
up to every 30 mins
Skelmersdale & Kirkby
trainlink

Lancashire will receive the highest BSIP allocations for a shire authority, where previous BSIP schemes have included the 319 Train Link from Skelmersdale to Kirkby. Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27270 (SN65 ODK) arriving in Skelmersdale bus station displays "Funded by UK Government" notices towards the rear of the bus, as acknowledgement of the BSIP funding. DAVID JENKINS

£670m for next round of BSIP funding

The government has allocated £670m to Local Transport Authorities, for spending on Bus Service Improvement Plans during 2025-26.

£245m is earmarked for capital measures, with £418m able to be spent on revenue. £7m is reserved for staff costs.

Urban Combined Authorities will receive capital funding from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, rather than from BSIPs.

The allocations are now being made on a needs-based formula, but more than two weeks after the announcement in mid November, LTAs had yet to receive official notification, and were also still awaiting details of the conditions governing how they could spend their funding.

The largest amount goes to Greater Manchester, which is due to receive more than £43m in revenue funding.

The largest capital amount, of £12.4m, goes to Lancashire, which will also get £12.7m in revenue, the highest amount for a shire authority.

The smallest amounts go to Rutland, which has been allocated £132,000 for capital projects, and £365,000 for revenue spending.

Alexander replaces Haigh as Transport Secretary

Heidi Alexander is the new Secretary of State for Transport, replacing Louise Haigh who resigned abruptly at the end of November, following a revelation about a spent conviction for fraud.

Ms Alexander moves from a post in the Ministry of Justice, but has previous experience as London's Deputy Mayor for Transport between 2018 and 2021, also serving as Deputy Chair of Transport for London. She remained on the TfL board until 2024. Prior to this, she was MP for Lewisham East for eight years, and returned to the House of Commons in July 2024, now representing Swindon South, the town where she grew up.

Louise Haigh's last announcement prior to her resignation was to introduce plans for an integrated transport strategy. Speaking in Leeds, she revealed her political hero "was a red haired female, lefty Transport Secretary", Barbara Castle, who introduced the Transport Act 1968 which led to the establishment of Passenger Transport Executives.

Haigh said that she wanted the strategy, due to be published during 2025, to put "people's needs to be at the heart of how we plan, build and operate transport". She highlighted that "local authorities and operators are not incentivised to think beyond their own remits", and proposed a "revolution … to wrestle back power over transport in service of the people using it".

The strategy is seeking input from local leaders, transport operators and users, and will run a series of regional roadshows during 2025. Ultimately it is intended to "set out a clear vision for how transport across England can evolve over the next 10 years".

It will be assisted by a change in Government appraisal methods, with more weight given to outcomes such as better access to jobs and education, improved productivity, business growth and healthier communities.

Metrobus switches to liquid hydrogen

Although there are still regulatory issues to overcome, Metrobus has begun to store liquid hydrogen for its Crawley Fastway fleet.

Until now, hydrogen was delivered three times a week in gaseous form in a trailer tank. The limited amount that could be stored in the trailer - 500kg - meant that only a small number of hydrogen buses could be fuelled daily.

The change means that a greater volume of hydrogen can be stored on site, compared to the gaseous form in which it was previously stored. As a result, Metrobus should be able to fuel up to 25 buses daily, compared to the ten or so it was previously achieving.

The liquid hydrogen is still converted to gas for fuelling, stored in the buses' roof tanks. A complete fill absorbs 37kg of hydrogen.

Metrobus has applied to store up to 14.25 tonnes of hydrogen, and more than two years after doing so, is still awaiting Hazardous Substances Consent to be granted to do this.

HydrogenIN WaterOUT
London Road Manor Road 10 Gatwick Airport
Fastway
6069
LV23 EYB

The on-site storage of hydrogen should mean more of Metrobus' Wrightbus GB Kite Hydroliners can be refuelled daily, and they will be seen more frequently in service. Metrobus 6069 (LV23 EYB) travels along Breezehurst Drive in Crawley on its way to Gatwick Airport. MARK LYONS

■ First has received planning permission from Aberdeen City Council to establish hydrogen refuelling facilities at its King Street depot. First will limit the amount of hydrogen stored on site to 0.6 tonnes, which means that it is below the 2.0 tonne threshold which requires Hazardous Substances Consent. However, as there are residential properties approximately 25m from the site, First is required to erect acoustic fencing to reduce noise levels.

Wellglade makes acquisitions and signs up for Flix

Trentbarton parent Wellglade has acquired Littles of Ilkeston, which is retaining its identity as a semi-autonomous operation.

The independent holds an O-licence for 20 vehicles and operates out of a single base in Ilkeston. Existing managers are being retained to run the business, which primarily consists of contract and private hire work. Its current involvement with local bus services is fairly limited, operating two buses on Derbyshire County Council-funded route 14 linking Ilkeston and Sandiacre.

More unusual is the purchase of Warwick-based Trans Rak International, a specialist designer and manufacturer of patented racking systems for transporting vehicles in shipping containers. The acquisition seems to reflect the background of Wellglade group Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Beaney, who joined the group in 2023. His previous experience included posts in engineering and manufacturing companies. Existing managers have been retained to run the business.

Wellglade has also become the latest major group to join the growing ranks of contractors on the Flixbus network.

It is to operate nine Yutong GT12 coaches for the German giant, a vehicle type also chosen by First for its forthcoming contribution (Buses last month). An internal announcement stated that the operations "will be managed as a separate entity", and that the coaches would enter service in spring 2025.

As yet, no details have been provided of where the Wellglade fleet is to be used, but it is expected to strengthen Flixbus's presence in the East Midlands, an area previously served by Megabus until withdrawal of most of their services in December.

HARPUR HILL
Littles
YJ07 VSF

Littles Optare Tempo (YJ07 VSF) was new to Trent as fleet number 312. It is pictured shortly after the Wellglade acquisition in Buxton, serving a local college contract between morning and afternoon journeys to Derby. TONY WILSON

Service improvements as Kent Fastrack expands

Go-Ahead London took over operation of Fastrack Services in Kent Thameside from Arriva Kent Thameside on November 10 under a 15-year contract with Kent County Council (KCC).

New timetables have been introduced and the established service B (Gravesend – Temple Hill) has been split into two routes. The B now links Gravesend and Dartford Home Gardens with buses then operating through to Temple Hill as route C. Service C2 (Castle Hill – Gravesend), introduced in July last year, which was previously operated by Go-Coach, is now provided by Go-Ahead London as route E.

A new multi-operator ticket, valid on Fastrack and Arriva services in the Dartford and Gravesend area as well as some Go-Coach services, has been introduced. It is expected that Redroute Buses will also join the scheme.

From spring 2025, operations will be in the hands of a fleet of 28 Irizar ieTram buses. Although almost all of these vehicles had been delivered by late November, their full introduction into service cannot take place until opportunity charging infrastructure has been installed at the Acacia Car Park in Dartford and Gravesend Bus Hub. This work is being undertaken by VEV on behalf of KCC. However, it is hoped that some buses may enter service before this, using charging facilities at the depot.

It was originally intended to commence operations using Mercedes-Benz Citaro buses displaced from TfL routes 108 (Stratford – Lewisham) and 358 (Crystal Palace – Orpington) operated by Go-Ahead London, but late commissioning of charging equipment to allow these buses to be replaced by battery-electric vehicles meant that alternative buses had to be sourced.

The interim fleet comprises 29 buses, of which 17 are Alexander Dennis Enviro200s transferred within Go-Ahead London. Seven Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs, previously operated by Sullivan Bus on TfL contracts, have been acquired from Ensignbus sales stock and three Mercedes-Benz Citaros are being hired from Dawson Rentals. These vehicles were previously used on car park shuttle services at Luton Airport. Two Wrightbus-bodied Volvo B7RLEs are on loan from Metrobus. All the acquired vehicles have been repainted red and suitable branding has been applied.

Go-Ahead has opened a new depot on the Crossways Business Park, near Greenhithe station, which currently has an authorisation of 37 vehicles. In addition to staff facilities, maintenance bays and a bus wash, this will also have charging facilities installed. These will mainly be used for battery conditioning, with most charging undertaken using the opportunity charging facilities. Although there is a public enquiry point at the depot, telephone and email queries are being handled by fellow Go-Ahead operator Brighton & Hove.

Further expansion of service later in 2025 will see service A (Dartford – Bluewater) extended to Ebbsfleet and Gravesend taking over route E. Go-Ahead London is also exploring the potential to operate additional services in the area.

On November 17, operation of the Dover Fastrack service started. Provided by Stagecoach South East as route D, this links a new housing development at Whitfield with Dover town centre and Dover Priory Station.

The £34m Dover project involves two new substantial sections of bus-only roads, to connect areas in the process of development to the existing road network. It includes a new bus-only bridge over the A2, featuring Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to prevent other vehicles from using it.

Services are initially running every 20 minutes on Monday to Saturday, and hourly on Sundays until around 20:00. Operating hours will, however, be expanded later in 2025. As with the Kent Thameside network the service is initially using diesel buses – five-year-old Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs transferred from Stagecoach West Scotland – but these will be replaced by MCV-bodied Volvo BZLs for which opportunity charging infrastructure will be installed at Dover Priory station.

Three of the four buses now carry Fastrack branding, on a livery resembling the original version used when the Kent Thameside service was first introduced in 2006.

Plans for a contraflow bus lane for the route through Dover town centre were delayed, such that construction commenced the day after Fastrack D started running. Funded from Kent's BSIP allocation, it is due to be completed in February 2025.

Bluewater A
fastrack
SEN63
WB66 SUL

The interim fleet being used on Kent Thameside Fastrack service includes Alexander Dennis Enviro200MMCs, such as SEN63 (WB66 SUL) previously operated by Sullivan Bus. MARK LYONS

Dover Priory Rail Station D
fastrack
YX19 OSG

Stagecoach South East is operating the Dover Fastrack service which started on November 17. Pending introduction of battery-electric vehicles, it is using Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs transferred from Stagecoach West Scotland. 37499 (YX19 OSG) is seen about to turn from Dover Road into Castle Hill Road on November 20. MARTIN SMITH

GLADIATOR II
IN CINEMAS NOVEMBER 15
BOOK NOW
11
every 8 mins
6135
national express West Midlands
West Midlands
Birmingham's famous outer circle
10

West Midlands Combined Authority is aiming to buy up to nine depot sites, the same number as used by National Express, although at least three of these are no longer owned by the group. The oldest established site is Acocks Green in south Birmingham, opened in 1928 and with additional signing to show that it is "Home of Birmingham's famous Outer Circle". Suitably branded 6135 (SN15 LHE), an Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC, enters the depot, having worked a half-circle journey on route 11C. DAVID JENKINS

West Midlands CA aims to buy up to nine depots

The West Midlands Combined Authority has agreed a bus depot strategy, which will see it acquire or set up nine depot sites across the region.

The authority says that the move is needed with or without franchising, as it will help encourage new operators to bid for tendered work. It says the number of bids per tender has reduced from five to less than two over the last five years, and attributes this to "most of the regional market now being dominated by one operator to the extent that it is difficult for other operators to make the case to invest in depot sites".

Ownership of depots, leased to operators, "will lead to reduced ongoing contract costs", it says. It will also support the authority's ambitions for decarbonising the bus fleet, and could also house the region's Ring & Ride service for less mobile people.

WMCA had also considered leasing existing depots and then sub-leasing them to operators, but rejected this as it "could result in market uncertainty and market challenges".

It aims to implement the strategy over the next three to four years, which will require it to borrow up to £44.8m. It says based on the experience of buying Walsall depot from National Express last year, it expects rental income to cover "the full cost of borrowing" and other debts associated with ownership. The authority thinks that further revenue could be generated "from making the infrastructure available to other parties" such as local authorities.

Unite announces strikes before Christmas

The Unite union announced two bus worker strikes shortly before this issue went to press.

In Greater Manchester, around 200 bus workers employed by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) were expected to take industrial action for four days, from 00:01 on Thursday, December 12 until 23:59 on Sunday 15 December. A further strike is planned for Friday, December 20 until Monday, December 23, with a threat of escalation "unless an agreement is reached".

The staff involved work in roles including ticketing, passenger assistance and information services across the Greater Manchester transport network. Unite claimed the workers were being subjected to "institutional poverty pay". The workers have rejected a salary increase of £1,290. Members of the Unison union are also involved.

In Hampshire,140 First Bus drivers and supervisors based at the company's Hoeford depot, operating across Gosport, Fareham, Portsmouth and into Southampton, are due to strike from December 19-27.

The union claimed staff "are now being paid barely above the minimum wage". First has offered a 4% pay deal, but the union said it had also refused to reinstate many of the terms and conditions removed during the Covid pandemic.

Transport for Greater Manchester to expand low cost ticketing options

Transport for Greater Manchester is offering Bee Network bus users the opportunity to purchase annual bus passes through credit unions, which it claims could lead to a saving of up to £240 over a year.

The annual ticket costs £800, the equivalent of £2.20 per day, and will be available for use when Tranche 3 of the Bee Network goes live on January 5. Using the credit union options allows the cost to be spread weekly or monthly at no extra cost.

The network will also retain a £2 single fare cap throughout 2025, despite the national cap rising to £3. This has been secured with the help of £66.5m in bus funding from central government.

The Bee Network will also be reducing the price of its seven-day and 28-day travel tickets from January 5. Unlimited travel on Bee Network bus services will be £20 for seven-days for an adult and £10 for a child (compared with £21 and £10.50 currently), while 28-day travel will reduce from £85.40 (£42.70 child) to £80 (£40 child).

A new hopper fare will also be introduced in the near year, for the benefit of passengers who use more than one bus service to make a single journey. The ticket allows passengers to use as many services as they wish one hour for the same price as existing single tickets.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) also agreed to extend free public transport for care leavers in Greater Manchester from 18-25, up from 21 currently. This is proposed to start from April 2025 and is subject to funding.

Transport for West Midlands trims tendered services

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) has announced changes to tendered services in the Bilston, Dudley and Wednesbury areas of the Black Country, and also in Solihull.

A number of routes have been withdrawn, with others diverted or amalgamated to ensure most locations remain served. Walsall-based operator Carolean Coaches, which currently holds only one TfWM contract, has won several of the revised routes, while Diamond is taking on routes at present run by National Express West Midlands.

In the Solihull area, several of the A-prefix routes are being withdrawn, and are replaced by services in the 600 number series. The changes affect routes run by Diamond, Landflight, National Express and Stagecoach.

Pete Bond, director of integrated transport services for TfWM, said "We have, working with the bus operators, used the funding available to secure the maximum benefits for bus passengers – especially those living in areas where commercial services are not financially sustainable. There are changes to some services and where there is a reduction for the vast majority there are suitable alternatives".

It was also confirmed that funding "to shield the commercial bus network from rising costs and keep services running" would now expire in March 2025, having previously been expected to expire at the end of December 2024.

TfWM is replacing hourly low frequency Solihull area services A12 and A15 to run more frequently on a merged core section as route 630. Landflight of Solihull's Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC (YX18 KWU) is about to start an A12 journey from Acock's Green to Solihull. DAVID JENKINS

New guided busway for Cambridge?

Greater Cambridge Partnership and Cambridgeshire County Council have agreed to seek a Transport and Works Act Order, to build a new guided busway to the south east of the city.

The route will stretch from the Cambridge Biomedical Campus for a distance of about six miles to the A11 interchange near Babraham, in part using the trace of the old railway line to Haverhill.

Following legislative changes in 2022, the mode of guidance can now be sensory as well as physical, and the busway proposals currently favour sensory over kerb guidance, but the order is expected to allow either to proceed.

The new busway, together with the existing section south from Cambridge station, would mean that buses to Haverhill would have around 40% of their journey on a reserved route. However, this would come at the cost of running only single decks, because of height restrictions on the existing guided busway. Stagecoach currently uses double decks on the service to Haverhill.

It is hoped that the order will be determined within 18 months, so that construction could commence during 2026, with a projected opening date of 2028. Current estimates are that the scheme would cost £161m.

Stockport Interchange wins two planning awards

Stockport Interchange has won two categories in the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards for Planning Excellence.

It triumphed in the Excellence in Planning for a Successful Economy category, beating six other finalists, including North Shields Transport Hub.

It also won the overall Silver Jubilee Cup, with judges stating that "A modern transport hub, new park, new homes, new active travel links across the town have begun the transformation" of Stockport.

The Interchange picked up a further accolade at the National Transport Awards, where it was declared winner of the Design, Engineering & Construction Project of the Year. Its competitors included rail and road projects, as well as Halifax's new bus station.

TfWM is replacing hourly low frequency Solihull area services A12 and A15 to run more frequently on a merged core section as route 630. Landflight of Solihull's Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC (YX18 KWU) is about to start an A12 journey from Acock's Green to Solihull. DAVID JENKINS

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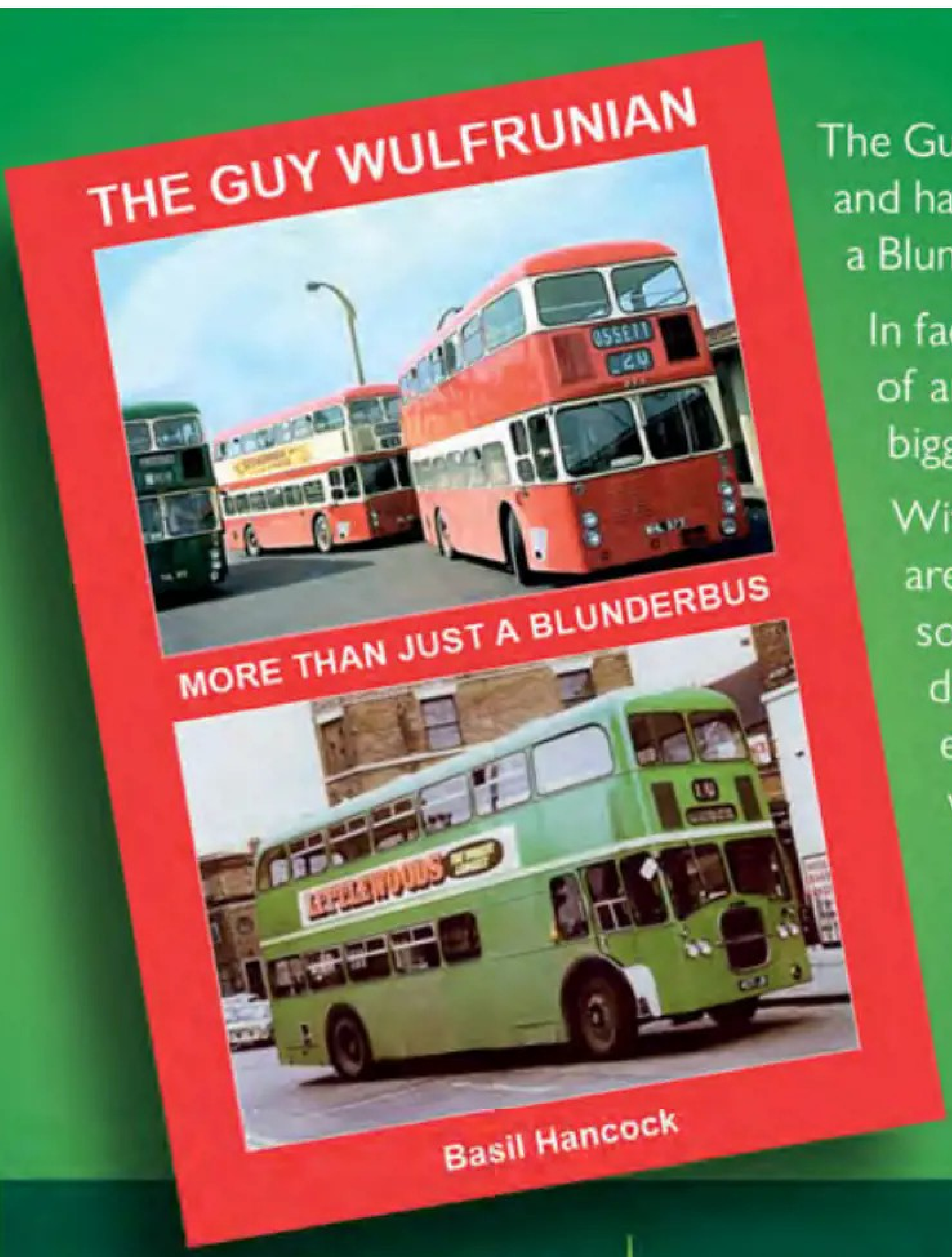

The Guy Wulfrunian is generally considered to have been a disaster on wheels and has nearly always been described in a negative way. But was it really such a Blunderbus? In reality there were many worse bus disasters around.

In fact the West Riding examples were once attaining the highest mileages of any buses in the fleet and the Wulfrunian went on to leave a much bigger legacy than is generally realised.

With a low floor, air suspension and disc brakes, the Wulfrunian had what are today considered as standard features - but nearly half a century too soon. More than 15,000 double-deck buses used suspension systems derived directly from the Wulfrunian, and even the much-criticised engine position was copied by around 2,400 double-deckers which followed it.

In principle there was nothing wrong with the Wulfrunian. Its main problems were that its manufacturer was financially strapped and could never afford the time or money to fully develop the bus, while in the absence of any other manufacturers following suit at the time, its specialised parts were expensive and hard to obtain.

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In this new self-published A4 hardback book, Basil Hancock, a semi-retired bus designer, engineer and fleet manager, an unashamed fan of the Wulfrunian and a former owner of one of the two preserved examples, tells the full story, the good and the bad.

Go-Ahead expands Cornish presence

Plymouth Citybus has taken over the operations of Summercourt Travel Ltd, upon the retirement of the company's owners.

Trading as Travel Cornwall, Summercourt was part of the consortium led by Go-Ahead which won Cornwall Council's tendered network in 2020, for which its buses have borne red Transport for Cornwall livery.

Prior to that, there had also been a number of commercial services, as well as tendered work. It could trace its origins back to 1997, and its own livery was generally white with blue and red relief.

Its fleet is mostly smaller vehicles, dominated by Mercedes-Benz Sprinters, with a variety of bodywork, including from Ilesbus, Mellor and UVM. Other buses include three short Alexander Dennis Enviro200s new to Bus Eireann, while in the past operations have also included double-decker vehicles.

It ran on around 16 routes, principally serving Truro and St Austell. Its garage at Summercourt is adjacent to the depot now used by First, but originally established by Western Greyhound. The Travel Cornwall operator's licence also had outstations at six other locations in the county, spread from Penzance to Bude.

The Ryder family also runs other businesses from the Summercourt site, including taxis, car and van rental, plant hire and vehicle sales.

Veryan via Tregony 51
Transport for Cornwall
WX21 UXU

Travel Cornwall Mercedes-Benz Sprinter/Mellor Strata WX21 UXU lays over in St Austell, prior to working its next journey on route 51 to Veryan. CHRISTOPHER CARTER

Rutland shrinks fixed route network for DRT

England's smallest county, Rutland, has agreed to implement a new public transport network, which it estimates will save £300,000 on current costs of £900,000.

It says patronage in the county has only recovered to 42% of pre-Covid levels, and is axing most all-day fixed route services, although retaining others that provide for school movements. Totally axed are the R2, R4 and R5 routes; the county council highlights a subsidy of £15 per passenger on the R2, compared to the R1 at £1.64.

The replacement is a four zone Demand Responsive Transport service, the contract for which has been awarded to Lincolnshire County Council, who will make use of existing infrastructure for their own Call Connect DRT operation. Minibuses for the DRT are being financed by an award from the Levelling Up Fund.

Of the fixed routes remaining, the R1 – operated by Bland's – will continue as a trunk north-south link across the county, linking Melton Mowbray (Leicestershire), Oakham, Uppingham and Corby (Northants). The other three are rather more limited, with Delaine's 201 just touching the east of the county on its way from Stamford to Bourne; Centrebus 747 running west from Uppingham to Leicester, and Leicestershire County Council funded route L1, a cross-boundary route from Melton Mowbray to Oakham. The county council subsidises only the R1 and 747 routes.

Rutland will look at a semi-fixed route operation for part of the DRT service, with the buses also expected to undertake school journeys at appropriate times. It plans to run the DRT free for three months, with a £1 fare thereafter. The changes will be implemented in stages during 2025.

Uppingham 747
Centrebus
St George's Cultural Quarter
776
SP58 DPK

The 747 from Leicester to Uppingham will be one of two remaining all day fixed routes that Rutland will continue to fund. It contributes 30% to the Leicestershire contract, held by Centrebus, whose Optare Versa 776 (SP58 DPK) was about to take up the last journey of the day, the 18:30 to Uppingham. The bus was new to Smith of Coupar Angus, for use on Perth park-&-ride services. DAVID JENKINS

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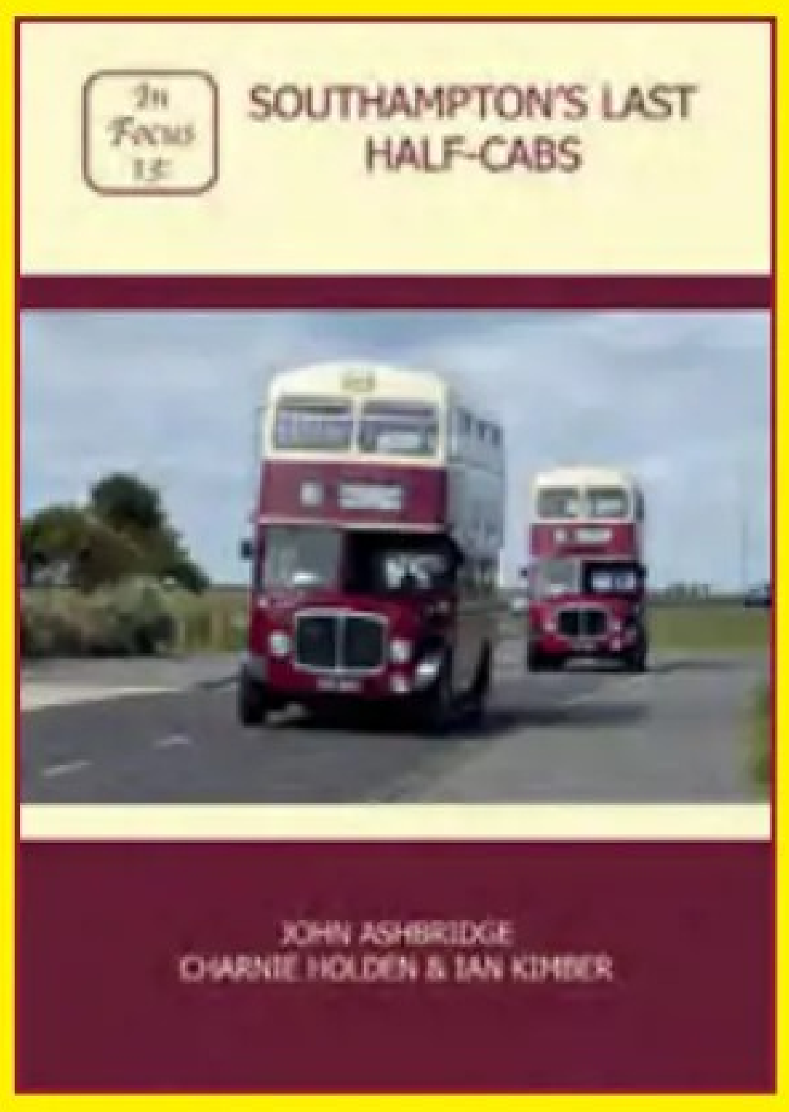

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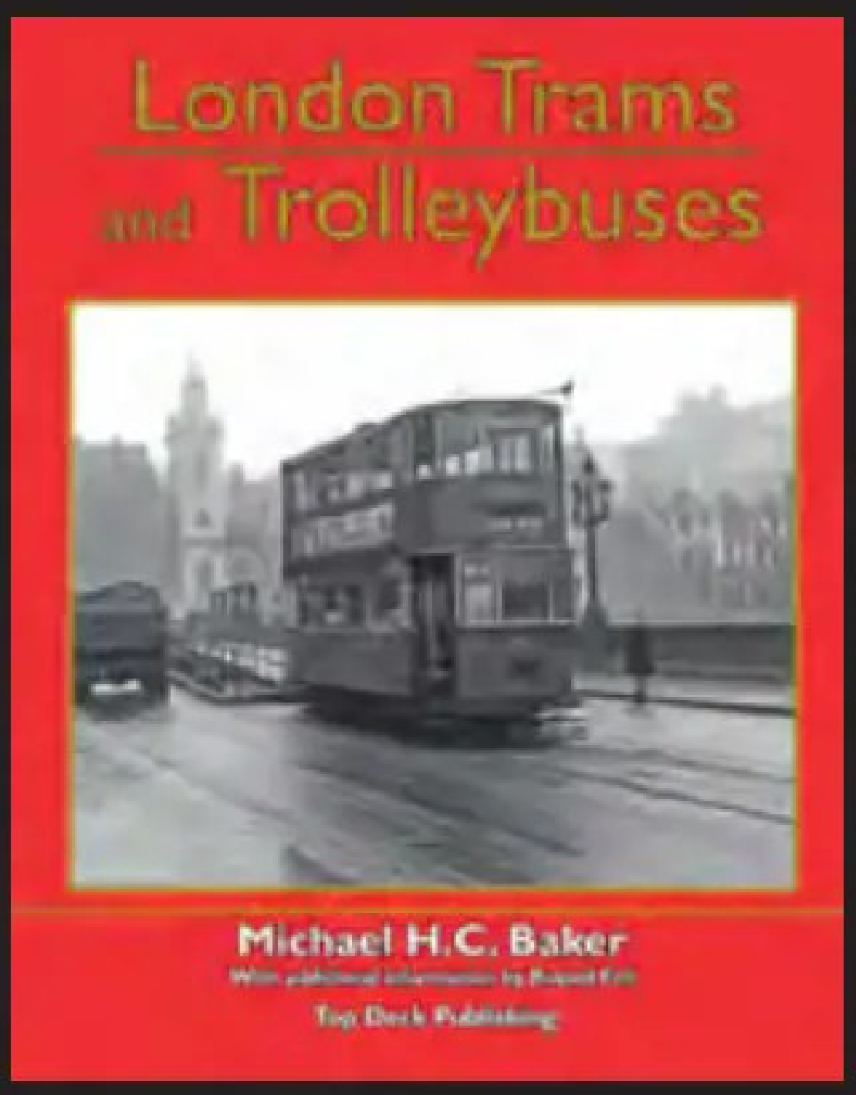
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INSIDE TRACK

with **JULIAN PEDDLE**

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 73 (YX18 KNW), recently acquired by Ipswich Buses. MARK DOGGETT

OFF TO A BAD START

Deregulation in 1986 and the 1985 Transport Act would be seen in most people's eyes as the death knell for Municipal Operators, but the first axe to fall was in 1973 as part of Barbara Castle's creation of the Passenger Transport Executives in seven areas. In Manchester, most buses were operated by 12 different municipalities, plus North Western, part of National Bus, and independent Lancashire United. All of these were merged over time into SELNEC, subsequently renamed GM Buses and later split into North and South.

Suppose those 14 operators had been left alone and SELNEC had become a coordinating authority and not a bus operator? This would not have been impossible.

SELNEC was not particularly successful and suffered a massive drop in passenger numbers over its life. The advantages of municipal operation are local knowledge, local control and local funding. SELNEC swept that away, imposing a standard everywhere that was not much of an improvement but removed the local control, knowledge and pride of municipals.

The 1973 changes nationally removed over 20 local authority operators, and many of the largest ones, destabilising the management promotion structure that was in place. Staff worked their way up between operators. When they progressed, they could move from a deputy manager role at a small operation to be manager of a larger one. Movement between operators was frequent, leading to cross fertilisation of ideas and innovations, all destroyed by Mrs Castle.

Deregulation and reregulation

Fast forward to the 1985 Act. I accept that deregulation was designed to diminish the role of municipal operators, but some flourished, and there was no requirement to sell your municipal bus company. Those that did were greedy for money which could be spent on another scheme, not connected with public transport, or realised their municipal would never be economic in the new refine.

If there were issues with local buses, councillors could point to the newly privately-owned company and wash their hands of the issues. Those that have remained have thrived. Ipswich, for example, has always provided a reasonably priced and reliable local bus service. Reading, with a succession of talented managers, has expanded to create, apart from High Wycombe, what was virtually the old Thames Valley Traction company. Having worked there then, I can say it is massively better now than 50 years ago.

And so we come to franchising and the Bee Network. All this has done is recreated SELNEC at great cost and disruption. If those 14 operators had been left to run over the past 50 years, I think the legacy in Manchester would have been so much better.

Will the Bee network survive without massive infusion of central government funding? It's no doubt safe for the next five years, and it deserves to be given a chance. If it increases passenger numbers, it will only do that by improving frequency and reliability, which means giving more priority to buses over cars and sorting out the mayhem of roadworks. That is going to be the difficult part, and an average 73% network reliability won't achieve that.

No plan

The new Labour administration has shown enthusiasm for franchising and municipals, and its transport strategy was revealed in the budget. For buses, it's clear there is no strategy. The £2 fare cap is going to £3, as the current £300m cost is not sustainable. The new £3 cap will cost around £150m per annum and give virtually no fare reduction to passengers travelling in England's urban areas, surely those most in need of cheaper fares and where the greatest potential for passenger growth lies. Annual rail subsidy is £11bn per annum. The total cost of the £2 fare is 10 days of rail subsidy, and £300m is less than the combined cost of the National Insurance rise and pay rises for rail staff.

The decision to scrap the £2 cap and give £600m to local authorities is a complete policy contradiction. Unfortunately, it's not clear that the £2 scheme has generated passengers. The industry and CPT have said how vital the retention of the scheme is, but failed to provide any evidence. The results of the reduced fares scheme in Cornwall appear to be a state secret. That evidence might have helped the argument, or not of course.

It seems likely that a 50% increase in maximum fare will lead to reduced passenger numbers, and much of the £600m for local authorities will be spent on services that have become unremunerative as a result of fares increasing. The DfT has said that the money will be allocated by some formula, as yet unknown. I'm willing to bet that it will have nothing to do with how effectively authorities have spent the original BSIP funding, nor on how many passengers have been generated by that funding.

In the real world, you would give money to the winners who are likely to make best use of it and have a proven plan, like Leicester, and not the many other areas than have no clear plan on how to improve services, frittering the money away on DRT, tenders than will never be close to becoming commercial propositions, or on seasonal fare schemes. The latter are desperate measures to spend money without any clear longer-term benefit.

The last Tory Government was, completely by accident, one of the most pro-bus administrations in the last 30 years. Unfortunately, the new Labour Government will, through ignorance, destroy much of the good that the funding achieved. Whilst a good proportion of that money was wasted, the evidence should have been available to target future funding to those areas that would use it effectively, but that sensible way forward has not been followed. The prospect of an improved English bus network has significantly reduced. ■

GLOBAL NEWS

by MARTIN BENSLEY

Quantron future in doubt after insolvency

A question mark hangs over the future of German battery-electric manufacturer Quantron after provisional insolvency proceedings opened.

The Augsburg-based busmaker said on October 31 that it is currently reviewing "opportunities to successfully continue business operations".

Meanwhile, as part of a "structured sale prices", a buyer is being sought for the company which also makes fuel-cell trucks.

Administrator Constantin Graf Salm-Hoogstraeten assured suppliers that outstanding bills will be paid and said operations would continue at least until the end of the year, with a team of 40 key employees. The firm employs 90 staff, many of whom have been waiting months for their wages.

Quantron did not show up as originally planned at the recent IAA commercial vehicle exhibition in September and CEO Andreas Haller suffered a heart attack shortly after the event. He is now recovering, and finance chief Beate Reimann has taken charge of the company.

The Quantron Cizaris 12 EV electric bus made its debut at the IAA Commercial Vehicle Show in Hanover in 2022, although the origins of the company go back to 2019. A fuel-cell version was announced for 2023. The Quantron is based on the Cizari body manufactured by EV Dynamics in Hong Kong, and looks almost identical.

Quantron's largest e-bus tender to date was in Italy, with the sale of Six Cizaris 12 EV to operator Miccolis in Turin. Several buses also operate in Munich area of Germany.

Tallin trolleybus lines saved as part of major revamp

The current trolleybus system in the Estonian capital Tallinn has been shut down ahead of a major overhaul, but trolleybuses will continue to operate.

Plans to withdraw trolleybuses altogether have been scrapped as calculations show that the transition to zero-emission public transport (with a deadline of 2035) would be much cheaper if the trolleys were retained and not all replaced by electric buses.

Tallin's system is the only one in Estonia. It opened in 1965 using secondhand vehicles from Russia and unusually it later used Skoda 9 Tr solo trolleybuses running in tandem.

The system operated for the last time on October 31 when services were withdrawn on lines 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Amid scant media attention, the trolleybuses of Tallinn City Transport AS (TLT) entered the depot at night and were replaced a day later on the now renamed lines 81, 83, 84 and 85.

The reason given for the discontinuation, well in advance of the planned road construction work, was the poor condition and advanced age of the vehicles.

Tenders are currently being invited for 40 new trolleybuses with powerful batteries for off-wire operation and the first should arrive within 12 months.

Ebusco gets support from China's Gotion battery maker

Struggling Netherlands bus manufacturer Ebusco is stepping up cooperation with Chinese battery-maker Gotion, which is partly owned by Volkswagen, as part of ongoing efforts to save the company.

The proposed strategic partnership with Hefei Gotion High-Tech Power Energy Co. LTD sees the Chinese company taking a 9.3% share in Ebusco. It has appointed a member to the supervisory board.

Analysts said the deal is vital for the ailing e-bus manufacturer. Ebusco has amassed huge debts and reneged on delivery orders.

According to the announcement, Ebusco will use the proceeds from the Gotion investment to "settle an outstanding liability to Gotion". This will ensure that the Chinese company gets paid by Ebusco.

Ebusco also announced it has raised a total of €36m (£29.9m) through the successful completion of its rights issue.

Haifa BRT goes for wireless charging

Israeli wireless charging systems provider Electreon has signed an agreement with TransIsrael, a Ministry of Transport agency, to extend the driving range and operational time of its articulated e-buses by charging them wirelessly while they are on the move.

The project, worth $4.2m (£3.33m) will provide dynamic and stationary underground wireless charging along dedicated BRT bus routes in the port city, as an alternative to overnight depot charging only.

Electreon will provide its wireless charging infrastructure, installed along segments on 1.6km of the 104km BRT network, along with its wireless stationary systems at end stops.

The technology will be also used on five Golden Dragon articulated electric buses owned by BRT operator Superbus, which serve the Haifa Bay area and several northeastern suburbs. Under the 36-month agreement, Electreon will manage installation, operation and maintenance and the wireless charging solution.

Israeli operator Elektra Afikim already uses charging management equipment from Electreon for its fleet of Higer battery-electrics at Rosh HaAyin. ELECTREON

Daimler launches eINtouro electric interurban bus

Daimler has presented its first battery-electric inter-city bus, the Mercedes-Benz eIntouro, as a near-series prototype using technology from one of its heavy-duty trucks.

It said the vehicle will offer a range of up to 500km, which makes it suitable for longer distances and higher average speeds on rural roads compared to an electric city bus.

The eIntouro uses lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries which are used in the eActros 600 long-haul truck. The vehicle is based on the Intouro interurban bus, which is designed for what Daimler calls "the price-sensitive market".

The current diesel-powered Intouro sells best in France, Spain, Italy and Germany and the electric version, like the eCitaro, will also be built in France.

Customers can order the new electric intercity bus from the beginning of 2025, and the world premiere of the series production vehicle is scheduled for Busworld in Brussels in October 2025.

First customer deliveries are planned from 2026. The company announced the bus at the recent "Daimler Buses eMobility Days" in Berlin.

Daimler also announced that the eCitaro city bus will receive the NMC4 battery generation "NMC4" (nickel-manganese-cobalt) battery generation with higher energy density, offering ranges of up to 500 and 700km from the beginning of 2026. The eCitaro is one of Europe's most successful battery-electrics and was introduced in 2018.

The eIntouro is available in two length variants of 12.18m and 13.09m. Seating capacity ranges from 50 to a maximum of 63. The vehicle is optionally available with one or two battery packs, each with a nominal capacity of 207kWh. Daimler said the two batteries can be fully charged within 90 minutes. With one battery pack, this performance can be achieved in 70 minutes.

Salzburg orders more Hess trolleybuses

Austrian trolleybus operator Salzburg AG has ordered 12 new articulated trolleybuses from Swiss manufacturer Hess to replace ageing Van Hool AG300-T bendies.

The new vehicles will not arrive until 2027 and are part of a joint procurement deal for up to 60 trolleybuses and electric buses for Salzburg and Innsbruck.

The current fleet of western Europe's largest trolleybus undertaking in Salzburg stands at 128 vehicles.

Three new Hess BGT-N1D light trolleys entered service in the city in November, with a further five due early next year in time to cope with an increase in service frequency.

The fleet of this type will then comprise 50 Swisstrolleys (vehicles 401 to 450), which represents the maximum call-up option under a framework agreement from November 2018.

Meanwhile, Van Hool number 275 has been sold to the Chisinau system in Moldavia where it joins seven other former Salzburg AG-300T artics already operating.

Bishtek closes trolleybus system

The city of Bishtek in Kyrgyzstan has closed its extensive trolleybus system, replacing the vehicles with Chinese battery-electric buses.

Officials of the city's municipal trolleybus authority approved the transfer of 100 vehicles to the city of Osh and more were to be reallocated to systems in Naryn and Batken despite a public outcry.

Concerned Bishkek citizens have written a letter to the country's president Sadyr Japarov asking him to save Bishkek's silent servants, which have been an integral part of the capital for 73 years.

According to city officials, the mode of transportation has become unprofitable. They said trolleybus passenger traffic is decreasing year by year. Much of the overhead has already been dismantled.

The city administration said 144 trolleybuses were still in operation at the end of 2022, plying 11 routes. The fleet included three driving school buses and a freight trolleybus.

"Trolleybuses can only ride on one route, and we cannot temporarily redirect them to other streets. That is, they can only travel on their lines, and during some road closures, it is impossible to change their route," said mayor Aibek Junushaliyev "Electric buses and other public transportation are more flexible."

In 2022, the Bishkek Trolleybus Department signed a contract with the China's Ankai Automobile Co. to bring 120 battery-powered trolleybuses and the entire charging infrastructure to Kyrgyzstan.

A citizens group has called for the closure decision to be reversed and said the move contravenes a law governing the loan agreement for the purchase of trolleybuses from 2016 onwards.

Activist Darya Nesterova accused the city of not listening to the wishes of local citizens. "They immediately started cutting trolleybus wires, although they had no legal right to do so," she said. According to her, the destruction of one of the modes of public transportation is sabotage.

"Bishkek City Hall in 2018 took a loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to upgrade the trolleybus network. The bank's money was used to purchase 50 new trolleybuses capable of serving the city. Therefore, all the talk about the outdated electric fleet is illogical," said Nesterova.

Berlin sells off unique Scania double-decker

Berlin transit company Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) has offered its unique Scania Citywide LFDD for sale, nearly 10 years after the one-off, twin-axle double-decker was acquired for trials in the German capital.

Numbered 3094, the 11m twin-door Scania was first registered in March 2015 and has covered 238,000km, according to an internal BVG document. It was withdrawn in March 2021 and saw occasional use for training purposes.

At the time, BVG was experimenting with smaller double-deckers to augment its fleet of heavy duty 13.5m MAN Lion's City DL class six-wheelers, all of which have now been replaced by Alexander Dennis Enviros.

The bus is priced at €67,000 (£55,800) and according to the BVG, it has several defects. The vehicle was vandalized while parked-up and damage includes a broken upper front windscreen and destination equipment. Some of the seats are not original and several internal panels and upright handrails have been dismantled.

BVG Scania 3094 passes the stop Wiglander Strasse in Weissensee in Berlin on school run in February 2017. GREGOR KRAUS

by **MARK LYONS**

A new contract will see the Wrightbus Streetites currently used on route 219 (Clapham Junction – Wimbledon), such as Go-Ahead London WS17 (LJ13 GKD) replaced by battery-electric single deckers displaced from their current routes by new vehicles. MARK LYONS

Clapham Junction 219
WS17
LJ13 GKD
Go Ahead London
219 Clapham Junction

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CONTRACT AWARDS SEE OPERATOR STATUS QUO MAINTAINED

Recent contract awards have seen the incumbent operators retain routes although several, including route 55 (Oxford Circus – Walthamstow Central) and D8 (Crossharbour – Stratford) will see a cut in their current frequencies.

The D8 will, however, receive new battery-electric buses to replace the Wrightbus-bodied Volvo B9TLs currently used. The five-year old BYD / Alexander Dennis Enviro400EVs used on route 230 (Upper Walthamstow – Wood Green) will also be replaced.

Most night services are operated under the contract for a similar daytime route, but awards have been made for four freestanding routes. None have a peak vehicle requirement as such as they use buses sourced from day route allocations. All will remain with their current operators. The MCV EvoRa-bodied Volvo B5LHs currently used on the N20 (Barnet Hospital – Trafalgar Square) will be replaced by New Routemasters.

Stagecoach London has exercised a break clause in respect of route 248 (Cranham – Romford Market). The current contract will therefore end two years early on September 19.

Metroline's Kings Cross base, which closed in June 2023, was reopened from November 30. Routes 30 (Hackney Wick – Marble Arch) and 274 (Lancaster Gate – Islington, Angel) were transferred from Holloway to free up space there for recent contract wins.

Full details of recent contract awards are in the table below.

ROUTE	OPERATOR (CURRENT / NEW, IF DIFFERENT)	PEAK VEHICLE REQUIREMENT (CHANGE ON PRESENT)	VEHICLES	START DATE	END DATE
55/N55 Oxford Circus - Walthamstow Central / Woodford Wells	Stagecoach East London	29 (-5)	Existing New Routemaster	Mar-01	March 2, 2029
56 St. Bartholomew's Hospital - Whipps Cross	Stagecoach East London	18 (-1)	Existing hybrid double deck	Mar-01	March 3, 2028
432 Anerley Station - Brixton	Arriva London South	10 (-2)	Existing hybrid double deck	Apr-05	April 7, 2028
219 Clapham Junction - Wimbledon	London General	12 (+1)	Existing battery-electric single deck	May-31	May 28, 2032
87/N87 Aldwych – Wandsworth / Kingston	London General	19 (+1)	Existing New Routemaster	May-31	June 1, 2029
46 Paddington -St Bartholomew's Hospital	Metroline	17 (-2)	Existing battery-electric single deck	Jun-21	June 18, 2032
230 Upper Walthamstow - Wood Green	London General	11 (-)	New battery-electric double deck	Jun-21	June 18, 2032
N5 Edgware – Trafalgar Square	London Sovereign	n/a	Existing hybrid double deck	Jul-26	July 28, 2028
N20 Barnet Hospital – Trafalgar Square	Metroline	n/a	Existing New Routemaster	Jul-26	July 28, 2028
N550 Canning Town – Trafalgar Square	Stagecoach East London	n/a	Existing hybrid double deck	Aug-30	September 1, 2028
N551 Gallions Reach – Trafalgar Square	Stagecoach East London	n/a	Existing hybrid double deck	Aug-30	September 1, 2028
D8 Crossharbour - Stratford	Stagecoach Lea Interchange	7 (-2)	New battery-electric double deck	Sep-13	September 10, 2032

ROUTE 358 OPP CHARGE TRIAL LAUNCHED

Crystal Palace 358

Following successful commissioning of opportunity charging infrastructure Orpington Irizar ieTram battery-electric buses have taken over operation of route 358 (Orpington – Crystal Palace). Go-Ahead London IE15 (LJ74 VPZ) is seen under the charging gantry at Crystal Palace on November 20. MARK LYONS

After several delays, largely due to issues in installing charging infrastructure, the operation of opportunity-charged Irizar ieTrams on route 358 (Orpington – Crystal Palace) finally began on November 20. The route is the first in London to employ end-to-end opportunity charging and ultra-fast 450Kw chargers have been installed by Jema Energy at each end of the route.

Go-Ahead London has taken delivery of 20 Irizar ieTrams for use on the service. These are equipped with 90kWh batteries which are charged during the layover time. They have sufficient capacity to undertake at least two return trips on the 15-mile route, which provides contingency to cover for buses being turned short or one of the chargers being out of use. Slow charging, to condition the batteries, is undertaken at Orpington garage.

The vehicles feature enhanced passenger facilities including slip resistant flooring, air conditioning, type A and C USB charging and e-leather seats. The narrow front entrance door has however been criticised in some quarters and passenger groups have expressed concern that the glazed lower panels may compromise passengers' decency.

Buses on the 358 cover a higher mileage than most Transport for London routes and the use of opportunity charging means that it is not necessary for buses to return to the garage to recharge during the operating day, thus reducing the number of buses needed to convert a route to battery-electric operation. The vehicles also have smaller battery packs than other battery-electric buses, which saves both weight and cost.

The delays in commissioning opportunity charging have led to the current contract to operate the route, which started on September 19, 2020, being extended to April 2029.

SUPERLOOP HELPS DRIVE UP PASSENGER VOLUMES AND MILEAGE

North Finchley SL1
HA8
SUPERLOOP
EXPRESS BUS SERVICE
SUPERLOOP
LK65 BZE

The introduction of Superloop route SL1 (Walthamstow Central – North Finchley), which began running on December 12, 2023, helped contribute to a fall of around 2% in the number of passengers using route 34 (Walthamstow Central – Barnet Church) which the new route partly parallels. Arriva London Alexander Dennis Enviro400H HA8 (LK65 BZE) travels along Sterling Way. MARK LYONS

Transport for London has published its bus usage report for the year to March 31, 2024. Compared to the previous year, passenger numbers were up by 5.2% to 1.89bn. This is still below the 2.15bn recorded in 2018-19, the last full year before the Covid-19 pandemic. The number of miles travelled by buses increased by 3% to 297m. Additional mileage in outer London, particularly the introduction of Superloop routes, has more than offset continuing cuts to inner London services.

Route 18 (Euston – Sudbury) was the busiest in London, a position held since 2018-19, with just over 13m journeys, an increase of 1% over the previous year. The second and third places continued to be held by routes 149 (London Bridge – Edmonton Green) and 29 (Trafalgar Square – Wood Green) respectively but route 207 (White City – Southall) leapt from tenth to fourth place with 10.9m passengers. This increase is largely down to the withdrawal of the 427 (Uxbridge – Southall) between Southall and Acton leading to a 20% fall in passengers to 5.6m. London's quietest route continued to be the 399 (Barnet – Hadley Wood) with just 9,233 passengers.

The impact on travel patterns of the Superloop, which was rolled out progressively during the year, is also becoming clearer. Route SL7 (Heathrow – West Croydon), which replaced the X26 in August, saw a 50% increase in passengers completed to its predecessor although this has to be seen in the context of a doubling in frequency. In general, the introduction of Superloop services does not appear to have led to a loss in passenger numbers on parallel routes, even where these have had a frequency cut, although route 34 (Walthamstow Central – Barnet Church) saw journey numbers fall by just over 2% which was no doubt in part due to the introduction of the SL1 (Walthamstow Central – North Finchley).

Other routes to see a fall in passenger numbers include the 11 (Fulham Broadway – Waterloo) which was shortened and diverted away from the City of London in April 2023. It carried 2.6m passengers last year, around a third fewer than the year before. Route 359 (Purley – Addington Village), which since October 2022 has operated every 45 minutes, lost passengers for the second year running, shedding another 10% of its patronage

■ The number of passengers using London's buses has only grown by 9.3m (1.3%) in the first five months of the current financial year compared to 2023-4, some 30m below the numbers assumed when budgets were set. Across London's transport network as a whole, TfL had expected passenger journeys to rise by 6% in 2024-5 in the wake of a 9% increase last year. This means that TfL has revised its projected operating surplus down from £161m to £61m for the year.

ROUTE 452 TO BE CUT BACK?

Transport for London has published proposals to withdraw route 452 (Vauxhall – Kensal Rise) between Notting Hill Gate and Kensal Rise.

Since March 2022, the route has been temporarily curtailed at Ladbroke Grone. This was initially to allow for urban realm works to be undertaken at Kensal Rise. A planned extension of route 241 (Silvertown – Stratford City) to serve East Wick, part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, where significant commercial developments are underway (*Look in on London* – August 2024) will go ahead.

Vauxhall 452
RATP DEV
RATP GROUP

Transport for London has published proposals to curtail route 452 (Vauxhall – Kensal Rise) at Notting Hill Gate. Despite what the destination display proclaims, London Transit VDW41006 (BJ11 DUY) was about to leave Vauxhall bus station for Ladbroke Grove when photographed last summer. The bus was new to First London as its VN36126 but passed to Tower Transit in 2013. It was subsequently one of the vehicles acquired by the now dissolved RATPDev/Tower Transit joint venture operating from Westbourne Park garage. MARK LYONS

Kingston Cromwell Road Bus Station

The main building, which houses an enquiry point, at the rebuilt Cronwell Road bus station. MARK LYONS

BUS STATION REOPENS

Kingston's Cromwell Road bus station re-opened on November 16, having been closed since August 2023 for a complete rebuild.

The new bus station follows broadly the same layout as the previous bus station, which opened in 1995 on the site of former coal yard, but has improved waiting rooms, better welfare provision for drivers and an information counter (although no opening hours are posted for this). It also has better information screens and CCTV to improve safety and help people to feel more confident when using public transport.

Environmental improvements include a sustainable urban drainage system which helps prevent flooding by managing water runoff in a way that mimics natural processes, using extra vegetation and rain gardens. Enhanced LED lighting makes it an energy-efficient building.

There are 17 stops, including 12 bays for originating there which, uniquely for a TfL bus station, are of the drive in / reverse out layout. Thanks to TfL's use of dual door buses with central ramps, none of these bays are suitable for accessible boarding – passengers with wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility needs are instead directed to a dedicated stop beside the exit from the bus station.

It is served by 29 routes of which 22 are operated on behalf of TfL with the remainder being cross-border services into Surrey which are either provided commercially or under contract to Surrey County Council.

TRAVELWATCH URGES ACTION ON BUSES

London TravelWatch, the capital's independent transport watchdog, is urging widespread improvements to the capital's bus service.

Its latest report, "The next stop: Making London's buses better", concludes that slow journey times, poor provision of information and the on-board experience can discourage prospective passengers from using the bus.

It draws on new research into what Londoners think about buses, carried out by Yonder Consulting, and on the views of London boroughs who play a key role in providing the right conditions for buses on the capital's streets.

Whilst acknowledging that some steps are already being taken to address this through Transport for London's (TfL) Bus Action Plan, more needs to be done.

The report noted that average bus speeds have fallen in every London borough over the last ten years and now range from ranging from 8.1mph in inner London to 10.3mph in outer London. The decline was particularly marked in outer London with most boroughs showing a reduction of over 5% in average speeds. Outer London also perfumed poorly in terms of bus priority measures with less than 20% of routes benefiting from them. Perhaps unsurprisingly slow journey times and lack of reliability were some of the biggest areas of criticism from passengers with 80% of respondents saying that faster journeys would make them more likely to use the bus.

There was significant dissatisfaction with how TfL communicates to passengers and with the information it provides. While people with internet access can use online journey planners and access real-time information those without digital access can feel particularly disempowered and find the journey experience more stressful.

Concerns about the experience on the bus itself included lack of cleanliness and overcrowding. Anti-social behaviour made people feel less secure.

The report outlines five key recommendations to help get London's bus services back on track. These are: improve bus operations; enhance passenger information and communications; improve the overall experience for bus passengers; strengthen collaboration between boroughs and TfL; and continue to promote innovation. London TravelWatch is calling on TfL to set out, in detail, how it plans to address these issues by the time of the next update of the mayor's transport strategy in summer 2025.

■ In a post-budget letter to Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, Transport Secretary Louise Haigh has hinted that the level of government funding TfL receives could depend on whether he agrees not to freeze fares. Fare increases will be assumed as the baseline for negotiations on future funding and it is expected that these will increase in line with regulated rail fares - 4.6% - in March 2025.

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Millar's TALES

Alan Millar's sideways view of the bus scene

Please send any stories, photos, (digital, prints or slides), cuttings and other information of off beat bus matters direct to: Buses, PO Box 14644, Leven, KY9 1WX Or e-mail: **alan.millar@keypublishing.com**

A REGENT IN MY EARS AND IN MY EYES

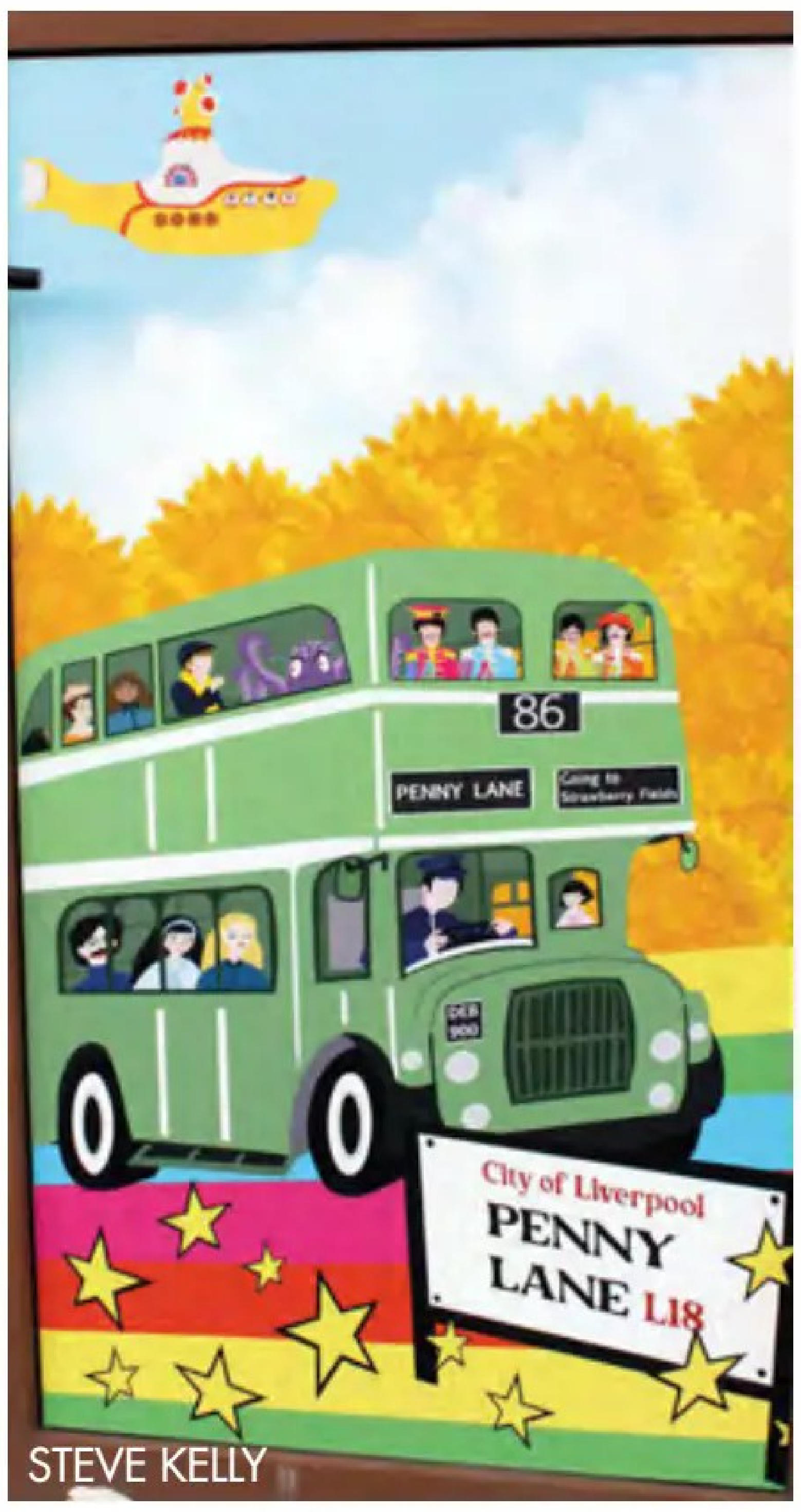
This charming image of a Liverpool Corporation AEC Regent V appeared recently in the windows of an abandoned café at the Penny Lane terminus, a building that originally was a passengers' waiting room and inspectors' hut.

Steve Kelly tells me that it's more than that, an edifice commemorated in one of the best-loved popular songs of the 1960s, the shelter in the middle of a roundabout behind which a pretty nurse is selling poppies from a tray.

It has been a stopping off point for fans of the Beatles for over 57 years, ever since the double A-side *Penny Lane/Strawberry Fields Forever* hit number two in the charts in 1967 and devotees have sought to follow in the footsteps of John, Paul, George and Ringo.

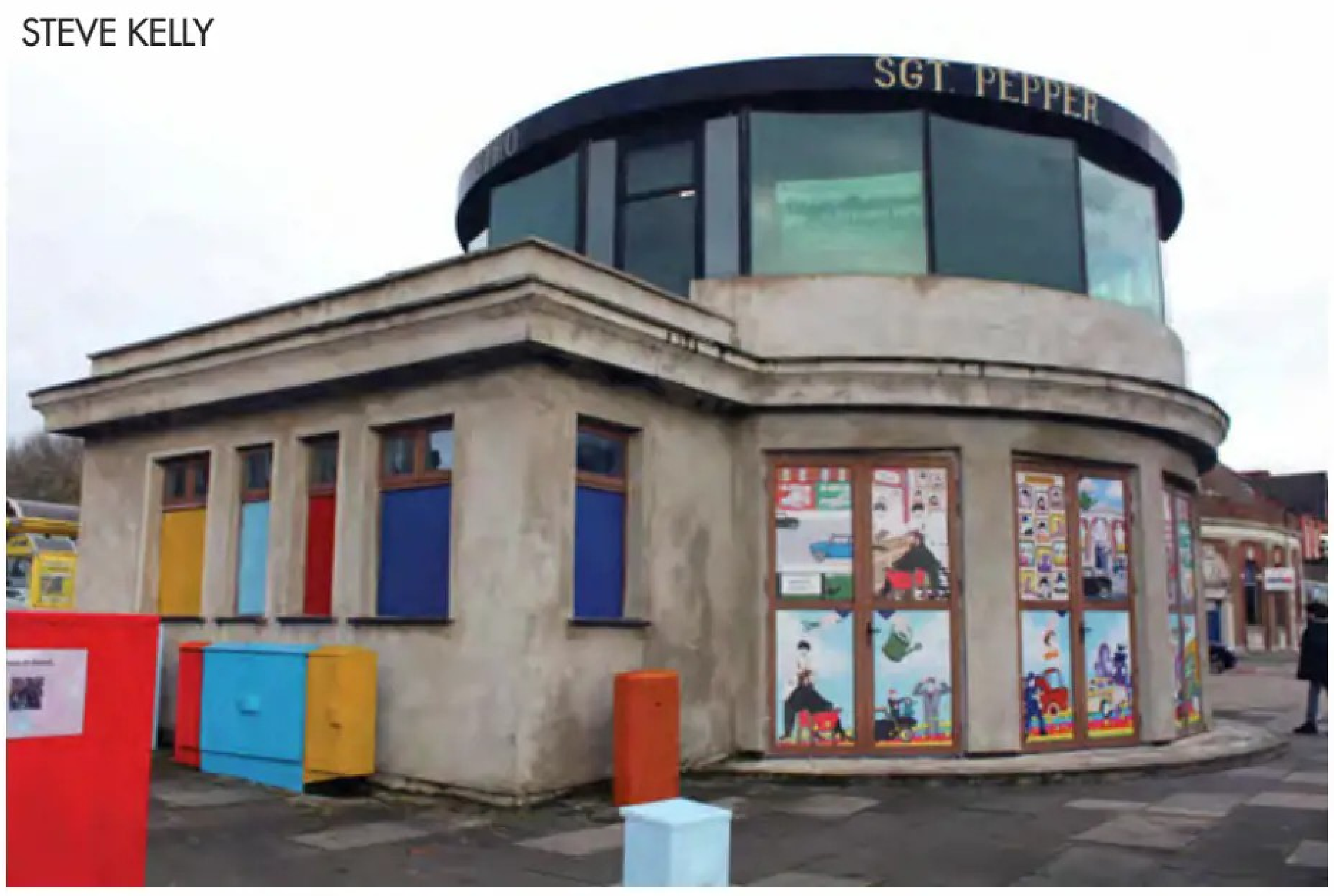
It's also a timing point and terminus for the Merseyside Transport Trust's running days, as in September 2013 when Steve photographed Liverpool A267, a Regent with Metro-Cammell body new in 1957, the year the city bade farewell to its last tramcars. A vehicle that I guess provided the artist with inspiration for the poster, albeit with some of the licence that goes with such creativity.

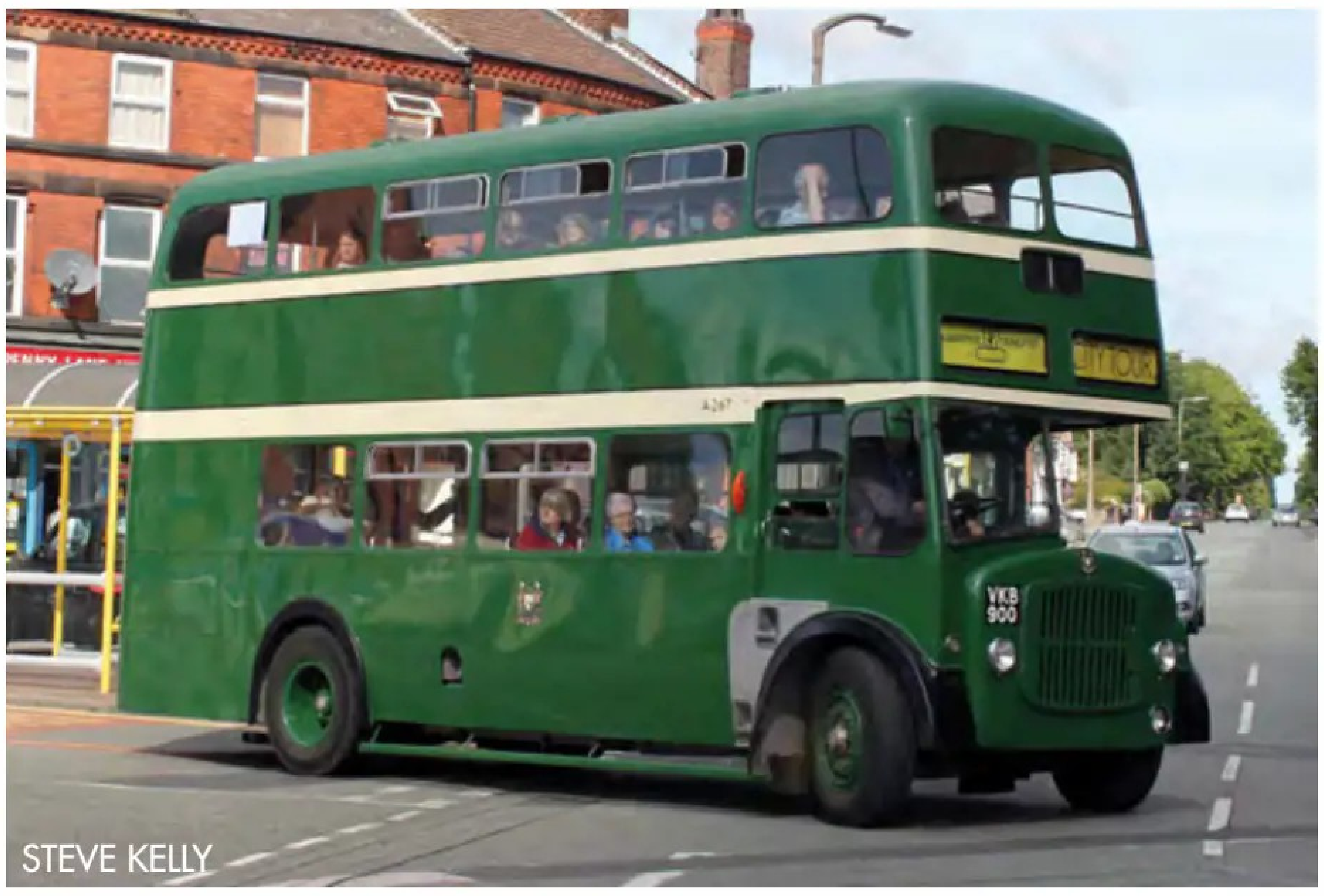
A267 was registered in Liverpool as VKB 900, but the poster shows this as DEB 900 — right numbers but a letter combination for the Isle of Ely — and while route 86 serves Penny Lane, it does not and never has gone to Strawberry Fields.



STEVE KELLY

STEVE KELLY





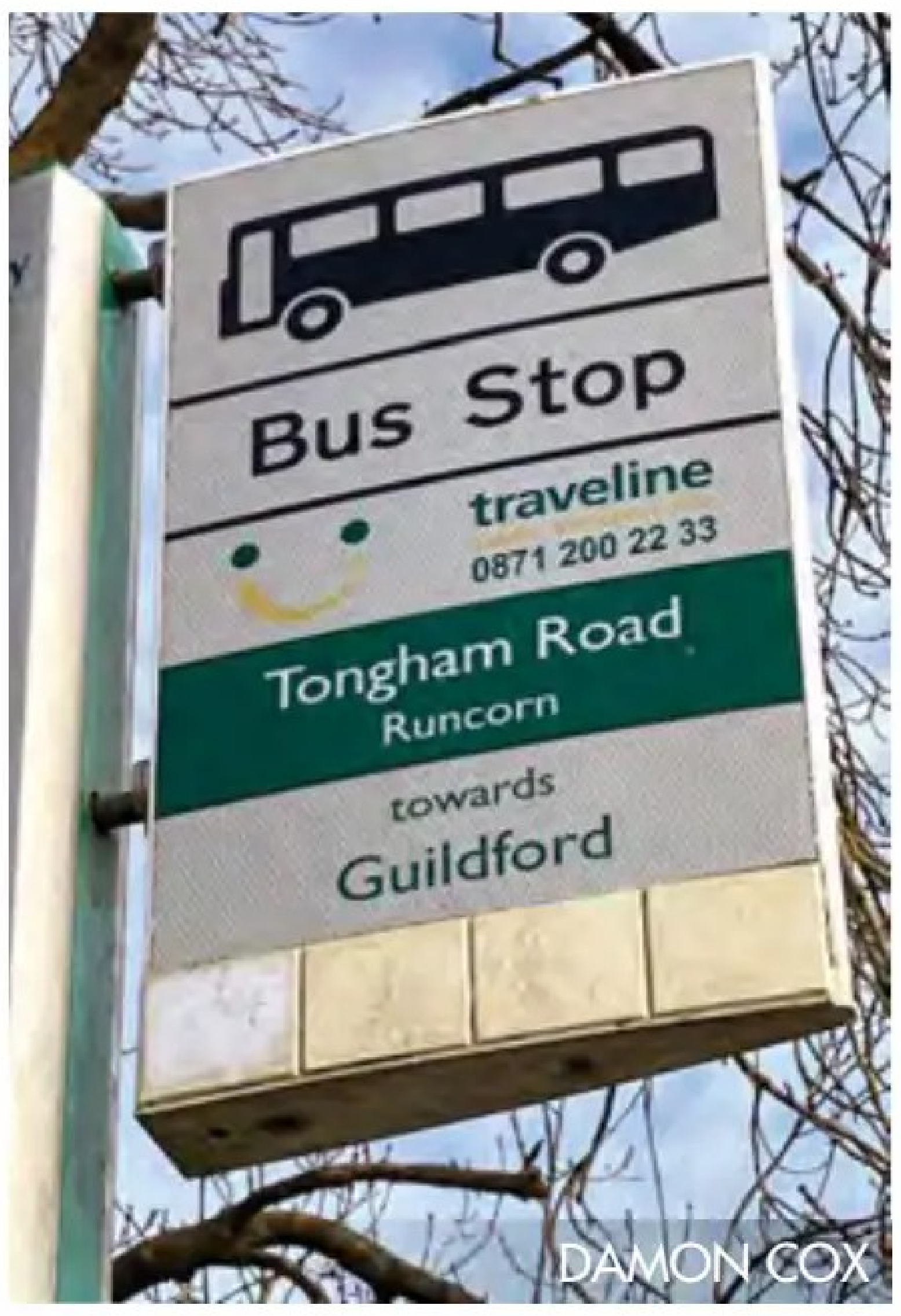
STEVE KELLY

LONG WAY ROUND FOR THE NEAREST

While driving through the Surrey village of Runfold, off the A31, Damon Cox was surprised to find that bus stop flags remain in place more than seven years after Stagecoach South withdrew its last bus service.

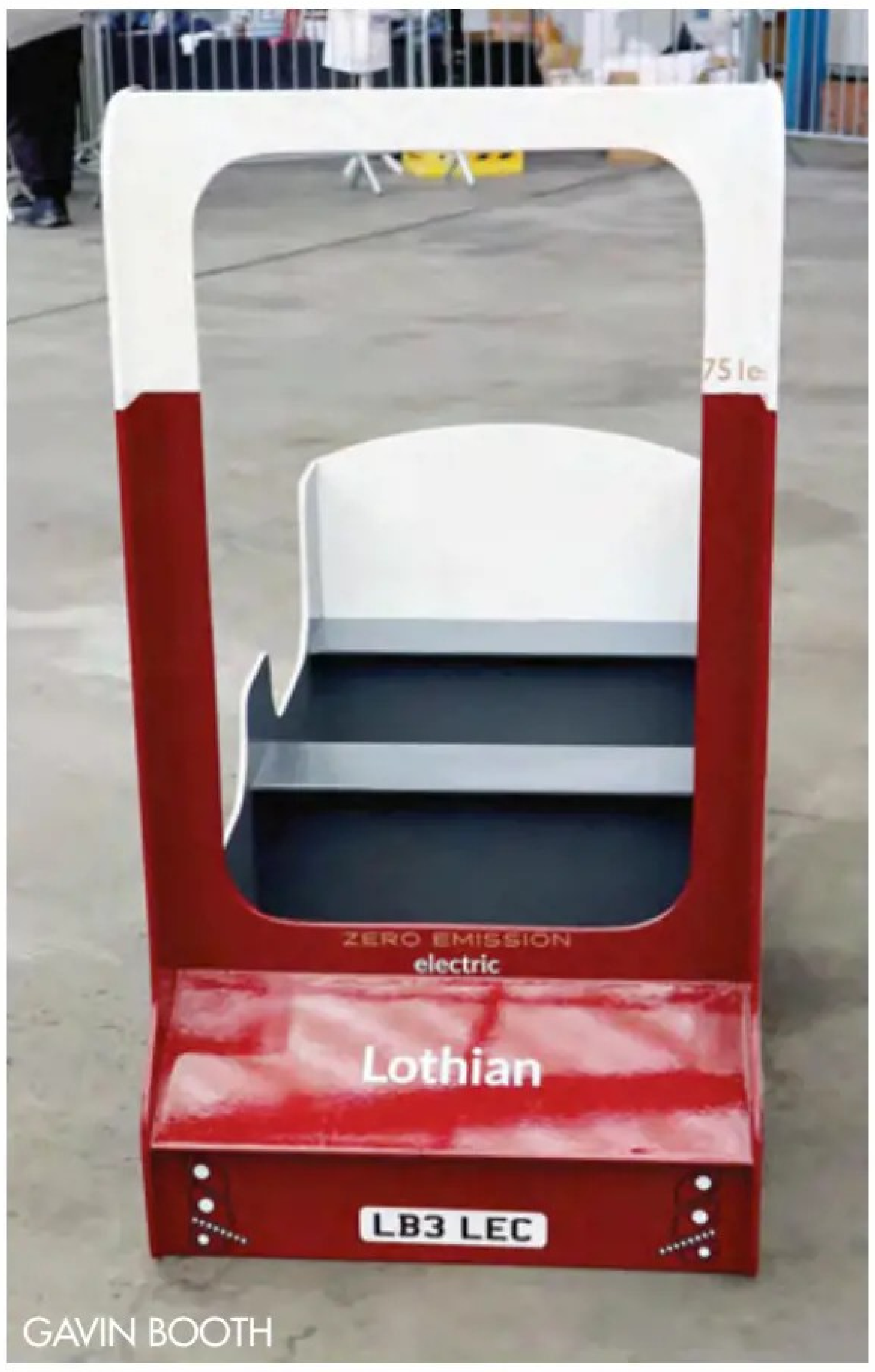
Congestion in the towns around 12miles apart at either end, Farnham and Guildford, had rendered the timetable unreliable and passenger numbers no longer justified the cost of the extra vehicle and driver required to operate through the village.

However, it wasn't just the presence of the stop flags that caught his eye, but the location where they purport to be. Not Runfold, but the Cheshire town of Runcorn all of 220miles to the north-west. Is that why the diversion was no longer considered viable?



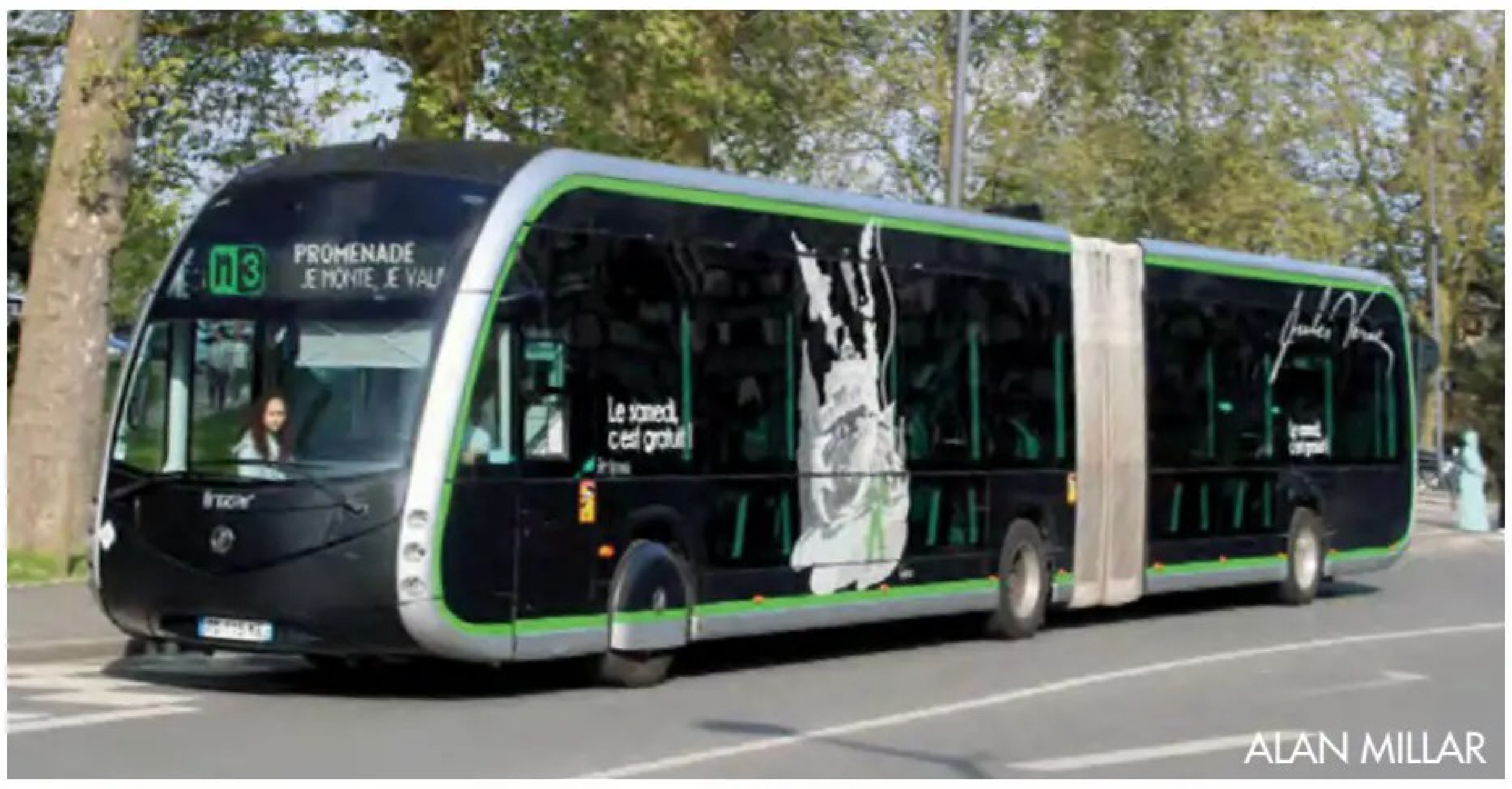
DAMON COX

LOTHIAN IN MINIATURE



GAVIN BOOTH

Further to Stuart Poole's picture of a mobility scooter in Lothian colours in November 'Tales', Gavin Booth offers this contraption which he spotted at said operator's highly successful open day in September, complete with fleetnumber 751e, which is the next in sequence once all its initial order for MCV-bodied Volvo BZL double-deckers is completed. It's a stationary fairground-style bus in which children were invited to pose and be photographed.



ALAN MILLAR

STYLISH CONVEYANCE OR A FASHION ACCESSORY?

Show a bus to one of the women in our lives and there's a good chance that they'll spot a similarity with a completely different object.

It was a woman who first suggested to us that the front of the original Wright Eclipse Gemini body, the version unveiled in 2001, was a dead ringer for a Nokia mobile phone. The name stuck in bus circles and perhaps the same will be true of the Irizar ie Tram, the first UK examples of which have just entered service with Go-Ahead on south-east London route 358.

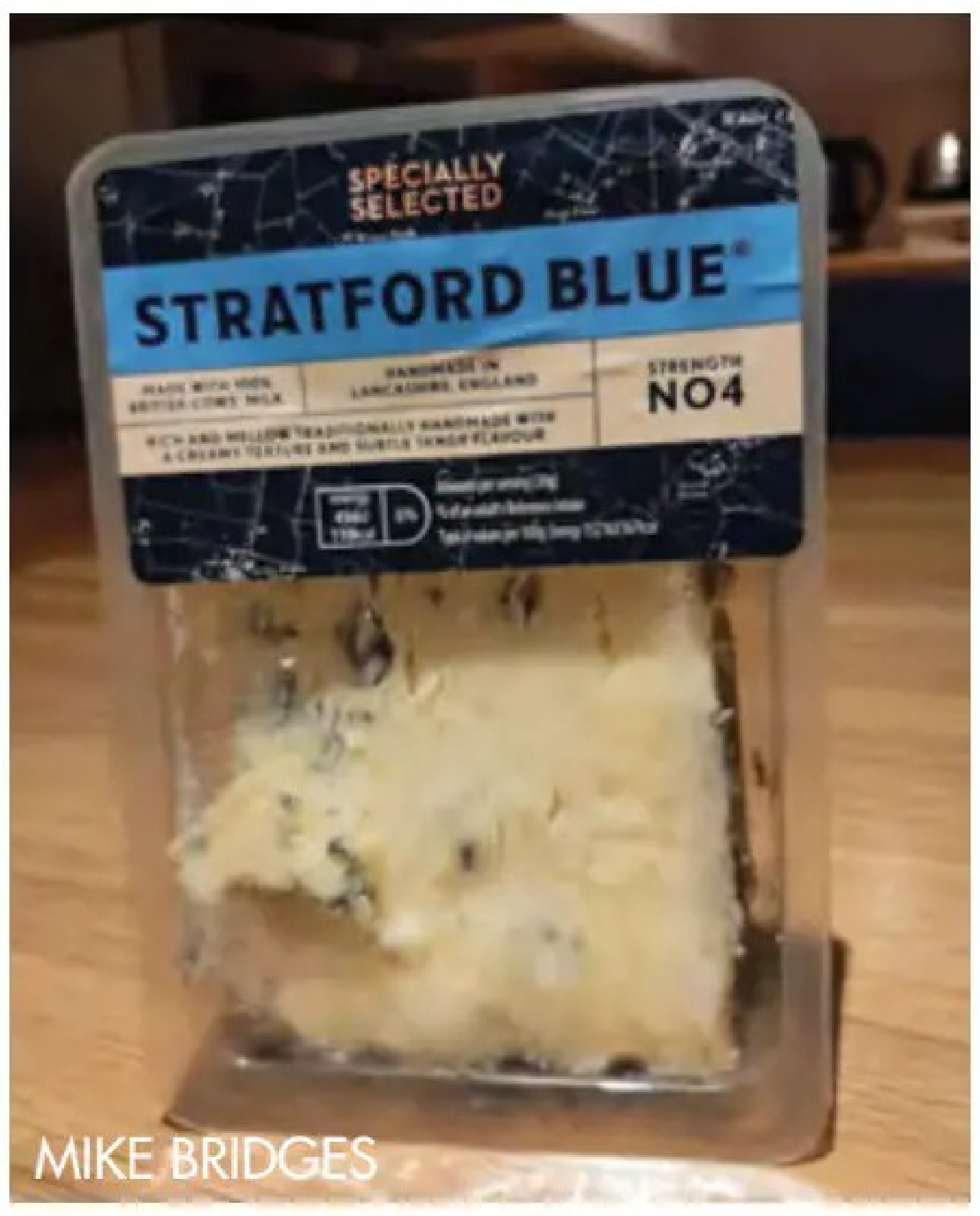
Tony Wilson shared a picture of one of them with Mrs W who spotted an instant likeness. "It looks like a clutch bag," she opined. Tony says she certainly knows a thing or three about handbags. "Whether it was a compliment or what, I know not," he says.

Judge for yourselves from this articulated example I encountered in the northern French city of Amiens last spring. The London examples are four-wheel rigids, but the shape is the same.

A NAME YOU CANNOT LET PASS BY

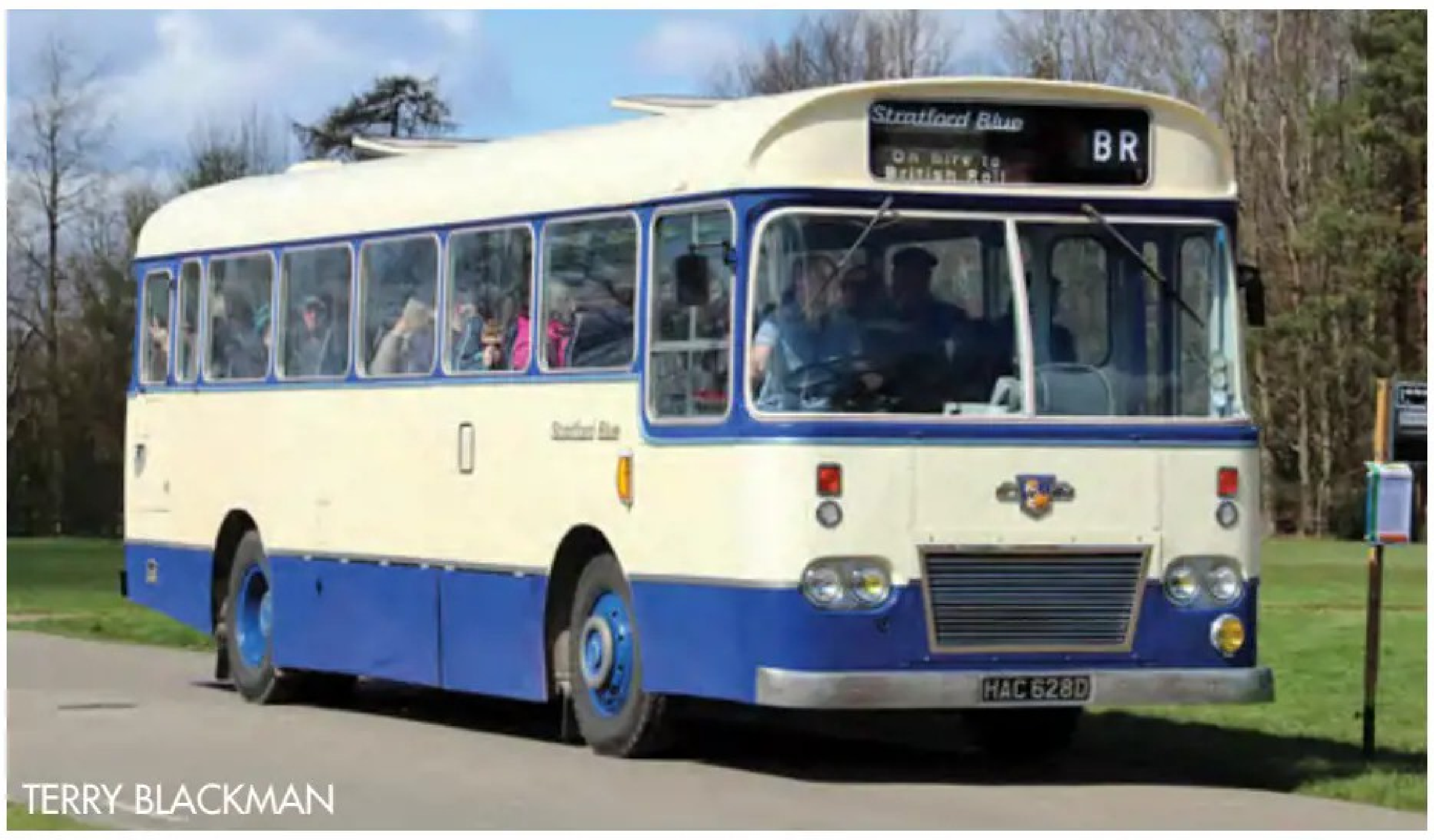
As someone whose love of cheese comes close to his love of buses, Mike Bridges couldn't resist the offer on sale at his local Aldi supermarket in Chipping Norton.

A fermentation by the name of Stratford Blue just had to be purchased, reminding him of the original operator by that name — latterly a subsidiary of Midland Red — whose service between Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon passed through the Cotswold town. It mattered not that the cheese is manufactured in Lancashire, for that also was the county of birth of the many Leylands that characterised the bus company.



MIKE BRIDGES

Terry Blackman's picture of preserved Marshall-bodied Leyland Leopard 62 (HAC 628D) is just such an example.



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Nottingham City Transport Yutong E12 206 (YD73 FSK) on Beck Street in Nottingham, liveried for the Blue Line 29 service. MARK LYONS

At this seasonal time, it is natural to reflect on the year ending and think about the challenges ahead in the year to come.

As the distance from a specific year increases, so does the ability to see the significance of that year more clearly. We don't have that clarity on 2024 yet, but let me share my immediate thoughts.

From a bus industry perspective, I'm inclined to view 2024 as the last of the post-pandemic years. I say that perhaps because it was the year we saw the end of the government that presided over that socially and economically difficult period in our history. I also say it because, as an industry, we learnt to stop comparing our current levels of service and ridership to what was there before Covid, and indeed, there are several heart-warming examples of bus services that are now performing better than they did in 2019.

Survival in the pandemic

The challenge in the pandemic period was fundamental: to keep heads above water and continue trading as a going concern. The industry would have collapsed had it not been for the generous financial support received from the government at that time, with over £2bn pumped into keeping buses running through the various Covid-related bus support grants.

I recall the weekly meetings with my fellow managing directors of bus companies in the ALBUM fold. Emotions were high among my colleagues, especially if there was a delay in receiving one of the grant payments. Running out of cash and being unable to continue trading were real possibilities. I confess to sleepless nights of my own. Still, in true Dunkirk spirit, I like to think the camaraderie displayed in those meetings kept us going, as did the calming reassurance offered by our chair, Bill Hiron, who was in regular dialogue with DfT officials and acted as a conduit between Whitehall and the SME sector.

This is an opportune moment to pay my tribute to Bill, who has rightly been recognised for his unwavering commitment to the bus industry in his roles with CPT and, more recently, his five years as ALBUM chair. His visit to Windsor Castle at the end of October to receive his MBE from Princess Anne was a highlight of ALBUM's year and richly deserved recognition for Bill himself.

As Vice-Chair of ALBUM, I have had a front-row seat at events during 2024, and it is fair to say the range of issues that we have needed to address as a representative of the bus industry has been unrelenting, and I mean that in a primarily positive sense. I cannot recall when buses held a higher profile in government policy. Buses are rightly seen as a tool for economic regeneration, and I'm told that during the recent negotiations between Chancellor Rachel Reeves and her ministers, funding for buses was one of the few sacred cows.

The new government has stated its commitment to improving bus services, and officials at DfT should be congratulated for negotiating a funding package for buses valued at £1.1bn for 2025/2026, comprising of separate pots for the £3 single fare cap and the continuation of BSOG+ and BSIP+, both of which I believe offer better value for money to the tax payer than the fare cap as they provide stability to bus networks in the longer term.

> *I cannot recall when buses held a higher profile in government policy*

A new existential threat

A central theme of the upcoming Better Buses Bill is, of course, to make the franchising of bus services by local transport authorities easier and quicker. However, for ALBUM members in particular, franchising represents an existential threat that could see much valued businesses wiped out at the stroke of a pen, despite being built up over generations of either family members or professional and dedicated managers. You don't have to look any further than the recent franchise awards by TfGM to appreciate that there is no exaggeration in my assumption.

With the Bill likely to journey through parliament during 2025, the New Year will be no less demanding than the last few! ALBUM, as you know, represents the municipal and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Great British bus business and on their behalf, we look forward to analysing and responding to the Bill in due course to ensure that the benefits of SME and municipal companies are understood and not lost to the industry and, more importantly, the travelling public.

In this and other issues affecting the bus industry, such as the need for a long-term and equitable funding settlement, ALBUM will be working for its members to get the best outcomes, and we've seen what can be achieved through having close and harmonious relations with DfT officials. The lobbying to make the case for Britain's bus operators has been seen to reap rewards. The £1.1bn settlement in respect of 2025/2026 is a good start, and we hope there will be more to come.

The challenges our municipal and independently owned members face naturally alter over time, but ALBUM, with its close association and good working relationship with CPT, will continue to ensure that the voice of the smaller and intrinsically local bus operators are heard at the highest levels in Whitehall.

■ *David Astill is Managing Director of this year's UK Bus Operator of the Year award winner at the UK Bus Awards, Nottingham City Transport, as well as vice-chair of ALBUM, which represents the needs of small and medium-sized bus operators across the UK.*

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Wrightbus launches new Ultroliner diesel

Wrightbus has launched the first vehicle from its next generation of diesel buses.

The new StreetDeck Ultroliner will be powered by a Cummins 6.7-litre six-cylinder diesel engine, coupled to Voith DIWA.8 NXT seven-speed transmission. The vehicle will be Ultra-Low Emission Bus (ULEB) accredited, like the existing diesel Ultroliner four-cylinder bus, which will continue to be available.

The first five of the next generation double-deckers will be supplied to Bus Vannin, the government-owned bus service on the Isle of Man. It is the first double-decker order the operator has placed since the pandemic.

The vehicle will be available with power options, either 250HP / 187KW, or 300HP / 224KW.

Wrightbus said the new Cummins engine platform now will allow for a mid-life repower to zero-emission as technology develops. It suggested a future option will be switching the diesel engine for a Cummins hydrogen internal combustion engine, or alternatively an switch to a battery electric powertrain through Wrightbus's NewPower business.

WRIGHTBUS

Jean-Marc Gales, CEO of Wrightbus, said: "The fact remains that not everyone has the funding to be able to make the switch to zero-emission. As a result, we believe in a blended approach of responsible technologies: battery electric, hydrogen fuel cell and the cleanest diesel technologies to ensure all our customers can continue to decarbonise as quickly as possible, whilst still maintaining financially viable operations.

"With that being the case, our role here is to make sure our diesel buses are as clean and efficient as possible and to ensure we can give them a second life as a zero-emission bus in the future through our NewPower business."

Bus Vannin Director, Ian Bates, said: "The five new buses to our fleet see a progressive step forward in a known technology, the internal combustion engine, while continuing to take into account the Isle of Man Government's Island Plan and commitments to climate change.

"Technologies continue to advance at an astonishing rate, but this controlled approach allows us to see how the network will look in the future, enabling an insight into possible hydrogen options alongside electrification."

Daimler boosts profits, MAN loses sales

Europe's biggest bus manufacturer Daimler achieved record profitability while rivals MAN saw sales drop.

Global sales from January to September at Daimler went up to 18,929 units, which was a small increase over the same period the year before (18,540 units) but revenue increased by 18%. Profits surged by 39% in the first nine months of this year.

"We are on track to deliver another solid year for the Daimler Truck Group in 2024. An important driver in Q3 has been our continued strong performance in North America," said Chair of Daimler Truck, Karin Rådström. "The successful turnarounds at Daimler Buses and in Brazil show that the hard work of the last years is paying off."

The persistently weak market environment in Europe, particularly in Germany, impacted unit sales of trucks at MAN Truck & Bus, reported the company, which is part of Traton which groups Scania, Volkswagen Truck and Bus and International. Bus and van sales were also below those in the previous-year quarter.

MAN bus sales stood at 69,200 units in the first nine months of 2024 compared with 84,200 units over the same period in 2023 – a drop of 18%. CEO Inka Koljonen had warned earlier that "we expect the second half of the year to be challenging."

Harrogate
1A Knaresborough then Harrogate
ELECTRI
BV74 NFO

Daimler saw its first Mercedes-Benz eCitaros for the UK market eneter service recently with Transdev's Harrogate Bus Company, including 1018 (BV74 NFO), pictured in Knaresborough in November. DANIEL STAZICKER

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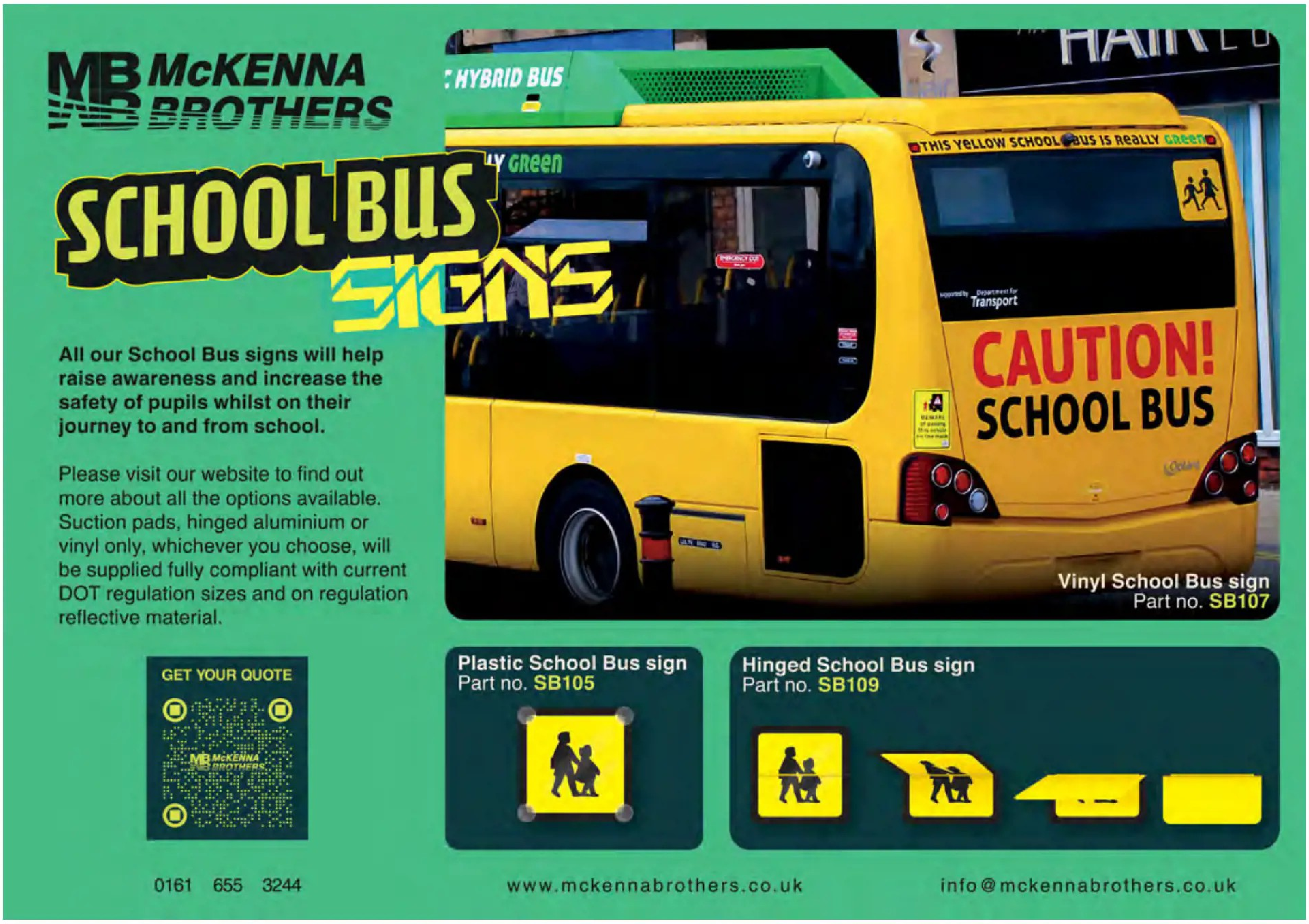

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Coach Travel Group makes bulk Scania coach order

Coach Travel Group has announced the purchase of 42 new Scania Touring coaches, making the announcement at this year's Euro Bus Expo.

The company is the result of a strategic merger of Alpine Travel, Barnes Coaches, Coatham Coaches, JH Coaches, Johnsons Coaches, The Ready Group, Swans Travel and Whittles, which was formed in June 2024 (*Buses* August).

Scania claims its latest generation of the Euro VI diesel Touring can save up to 6% in fuel and emissions, without compromising on performance. It said this is achieved through several factors, but highlighted an improved cruise control system with active prediction in particular.

The new vehicles will be PSVAR-compliant, accommodating wheelchair users and offering improved accessibility features such as a lower passenger aisle in the coach, meaning fewer steps and more headroom while providing easier access to seats. Scania said this change does not compromise on luggage capacity.

Tom Stables, CEO at The Coach Travel Group, said: "The new Scania Touring coaches are equipped with state-of-the-art features designed to enhance passenger comfort, vehicle reliability, sustainability and safety. Our passengers will benefit from luxurious seating, advanced climate control, and on-board entertainment systems, ensuring every journey is one to remember."

The order was announced at Euro Bus Expo this year, where a Scania Touring coach was on display. JAMES DAY

Falcon Buses is first independent to order Enviro200EV

Falcon Buses of Byfleet, Surrey, is the first independent operator to place an order for the new Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV single-decker, with 13 vehicles due to be delivered in 2026.

The order, confirmed at Euro Bus Expo 2024, follows the operator's successful bid in partnership with Surrey County Council for funding from the second phase of the UK Government's Zero-Emission Regional Bus Areas (ZEBRA) scheme.

The Enviro200EVs will be allocated to route 436, connecting Woking with Weybridge, and route 461 between Chertsey and Kingston.

All of the vehicles in the order will be at the 10.9m length option, with 37 seats. Six of these seats will be tip-ups, to allows for two wheelchair/pushchair bays. The medium-duty version of the Voith Electrical Drive System has been selected to power the buses, with energy stored in 400kWh batteries.

Richard Telling, Managing Director of Falcon Buses, said: "The Enviro200 has long been the mainstay of our services, with over 50 in operation and 15 examples added this year alone. With the next generation offering four seats more than other vehicles of this length, the Enviro200EV was an easy choice for us."

Go-Ahead swallows up Swanbrook

Another family-owned coach company has sold out to a conglomerate, this time Swanbrook Transport of Gloucestershire.

Established in the 1960s by the Thomas family, its modern base at Staverton is about halfway between Cheltenham and Gloucester. It holds an O-licence for 35 vehicles.

As well as home to school and private hire work, it also operates a single local bus service, Cheltenham off-peak route K, which requires one bus. However in the past it has operated many tendered services, including park and ride in Cheltenham, and from time to time, competed on commercial routes. For many years it also ran the twice-a-day 853 coach service to Oxford, which passed to Stagecoach in 2020.

The fleet of coaches is supplemented by elderly double-deckers for school work, and Optare Solos and a Wright Streetlite, which see use on route K.

Go-Ahead will place management of the company under Pulham's Coaches, which it purchased in summer 2023. Pulham's already runs interurban services into Cheltenham, alongside some town services.

Swanbrook, which has a business mix including school transport and coach hire, was established in 1960. Back in 2010, a Swanbrook Caetano Levante-bodied Scania K340 parks up in Cheltenham. DAVE RUSSELL / DERIC PEMBERTON

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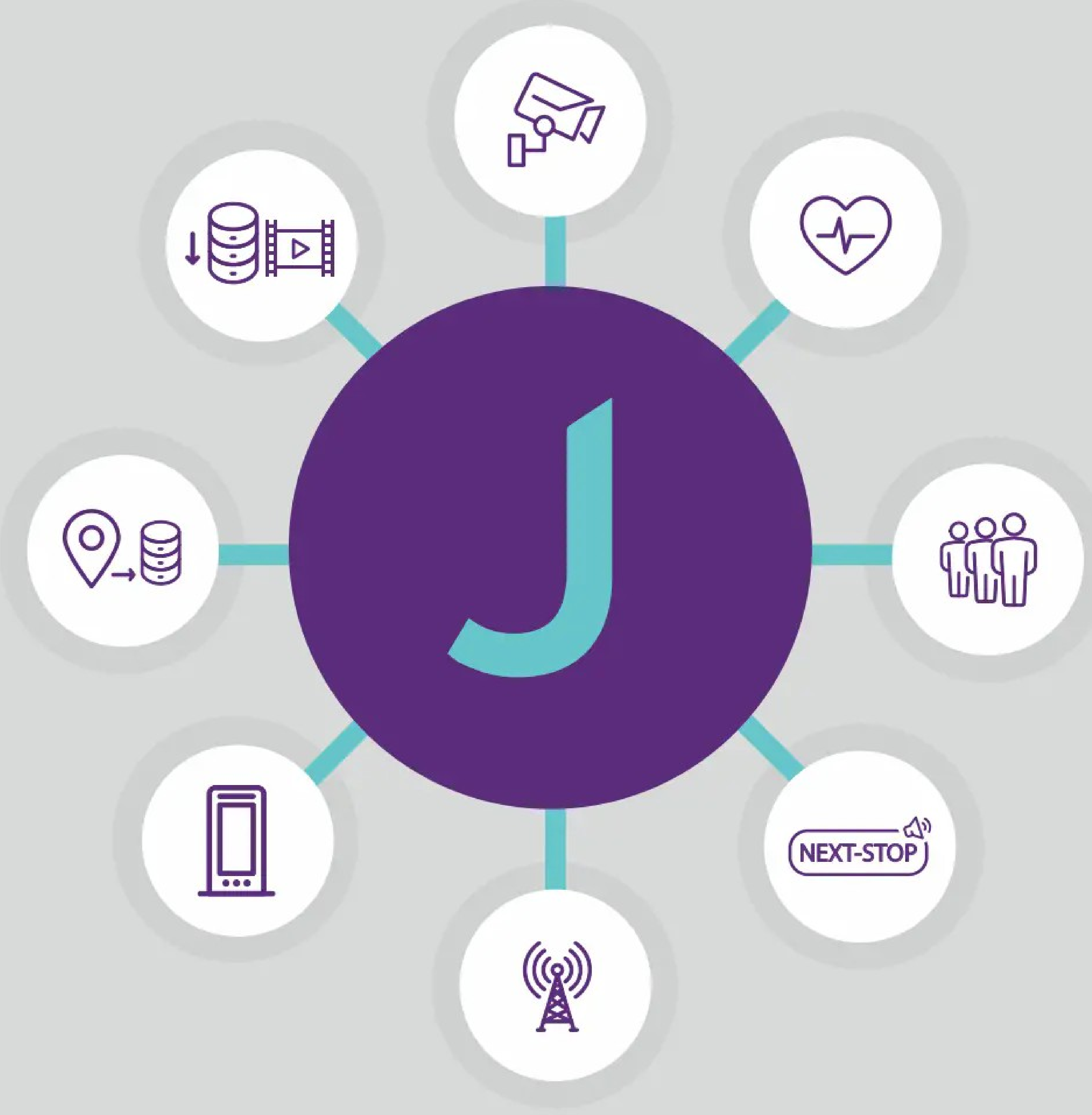

THE BEST OF THE BEST

SMEs and municipally-owned operators made a strong showing at this year's UK Bus Awards, as **JAMES DAY** reports

Over 600 industry professionals attended the annual dinner and award ceremony at Troxy in East London. UK BUS AWARDS

When UK Bus Awards Chair and Consultant Editor of *Buses*, Alan Millar, described the strength of the entries at the 2024 UK Bus Awards, he said it was a case of "separating the excellent from the truly excellent". The ceremony, held once again at Troxy in Stepney, East London and hosted by BBC presenter Jane Hill, attracted over 600 attendees for its 28th event.

Millar said: "This event is testament to the passion, dedication and ingenuity of those in the bus industry. It's not just about buses; it's about people, connection and progress. Every winner and finalist inspires the wider industry to continue striving for excellence."

NOTTINGHAM'S CITY TRANSPORT SINCE 1897
CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP
Strelley 78
Nottingham City Transport

Nottingham City Transport Alexander Dennis Enviro400-bodied Scania N230UD 627 (YN14 MUV) wears a livery celebrating 125 years of public ownership, a milestone reached in 2022. MARK LYONS

Breaking records

The winner of the top prize for UK Bus Operator of the Year for a record sixth time was Nottingham City Transport (NCT), after

OPERATOR AWARDS

TOP NATIONAL BUS DEPOT

GOLD: Derby - Arriva
SILVER: Grimsby - Stagecoach East Midlands
BRONZE: Chester - Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire

TOP INDEPENDENT OPERATOR

GOLD: Sanders Coaches
SILVER: Coach Services
BRONZE: Whippet

TOP SHIRE OPERATOR

GOLD: Reading Buses
SILVER: Go South Coast
BRONZE: Libertybus

TOP CITY OPERATOR

GOLD: Nottingham City Transport
SILVER: Brighton & Hove Buses
BRONZE: Lothian Buses

UK BUS OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

GOLD: Nottingham City Transport
SILVER: Sanders Coaches
BRONZE: Reading Buses

Sanders Coaches Wright Eclipse Gemini 3-bodied Volvo B5TL 126 (LL71 SHA), named Lily Lucy Shade, operates the X44 service on St Stephens Street in Norwich. The operator has secured back-to-back wins in the Top Independent Operator category. TONY WILSON

being successful in the category of Top City Operator. It previously won the top title in 2004, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2019.

The company was praised by the judges for its consistent high performance, and impressed the mystery traveller with its high standard of vehicles, wide availability of printed timetables and the audio-visual announcements, which told passengers about key points of interest on the route.

The traveller also noted several examples of exceptional customer service, such as ensuring passengers boarded before a driver change and skilfully adjusting to challenges like a blocked bus stop, where the driver pulled forward to allow safe and convenient boarding without blocking traffic on the road.

The mystery travel scores are what determine the overall winner, and the judges said NCT significantly outperformed those of all other operators in their respective categories.

NCT's Brian Bowater took silver in the Unsung Hero category, celebrated as the "social glue" of the company. He has dedicated his spare time to organising activities for the Staff Social Society. The company also regularly sees its representative perform well in driver awards, but while driver David Townsend made the shortlist for Top National Bus Driver, he was taken ill before the process concluded. He was encouraged to re-enter the category next year.

Silver in the Top City Operator category was Go-Ahead Group-owned Brighton & Hove, with judges stating that its continued excellence is reflected in the region's position as the leading area for average bus journeys per capita outside London. Lothian Buses took bronze, which the judges called "consistently good", with dependable and high-quality service.

Best of the SMEs

This year's Top Independent Operator for a second year running was Sanders Coaches of Holt. The smaller operators in this category tend to take the bronze in the overall operator of the year listings, but Sanders secured the silver this year.

The citation for Top Shire Operator, Reading Buses, included the establishment of a park-&- ride service for the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Scania K270UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 gas bus 405 (YR13 PMO) operates the service. MARK LYONS

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

BUS & THE COMMUNITY

GOLD: Bristol Bus Boycott - First West of England
SILVER: Sanders Coaches
BRONZE: Skegness Seasiders fundraising - Stagecoach East Midlands
HIGHLY COMMENDED: There is someone… - First West of England and Suicide Prevention UK

CULTURE CHANGE

GOLD: Training through dramatised storytelling - Brighton & Hove Buses and Metrobus
SILVER: From strikes to strength - Go North East
BRONZE: Driver culture change - Transport UK London Bus
HIGHLY COMMENDED: People at the Heart Capability Policy - Stagecoach South East

ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

GOLD: Augmented Engineer - Translink
SILVER: Outdoor Sustainability Initiative for Bus - Global
BRONZE: Summercourt depot EV charging hub - First Bus South

GOING FOR GROWTH

GOLD: Heathrow's Sustainable Travel Zone
SILVER: Libertybus
BRONZE: Breckland Beeline - Coach Services
HIGHLY COMMENDED: More buses, new tickets, new buses, new look! - Portsmouth Buses Partnership

MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

GOLD: Let's Go Car Free - Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire, Cumbria Tourism and Avanti West Coast
SILVER: Generation Go - Go East Anglia
BRONZE: Route 1X - Brighton & Hove Buses
HIGHLY COMMENDED: Free to Explore - First Bus Scotland

PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE

GOLD: Portsmouth Buses Partnership
SILVER: Student Travel Pass - Nottinghamshire County Council, West Notts College, Stagecoach East Midlands and Trentbarton
BRONZE: Reading Buses and Heathrow
HIGHLY COMMENDED: Breeze app - Solent Transport

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

GOLD: Elite Driver Academy - Go North West
SILVER: Driver recruitment - Brighton & Hove Buses and Metrobus
BRONZE: Grimsby depot - Stagecoach East Midlands
HIGHLY COMMENDED: We are Lothian - Lothian Buses

Ulsterbus, Banbridge
(Translink)
UK BUS AWARDS
2024

Top National Bus Driver, Ivan Cochrane of Translink, receives his award from Buses Editor James Day. UK BUS AWARDS

GOLD
AWARD
LUKE REES-PULLEY AWARD FOR
TOP LONDON BUS DRIVER
Donnette Miller
RATP Dev Transit London
UK BUS AWARDS
2024

RATP Dev Transit's Donnette Miller won the award for Top London Bus Driver. UK BUS AWARDS

Judges highlighted the company's "strong and consistent passenger growth over the past year", continuing the success it has seen on routes where BSIP funding has been used. The company was also given credit for its commitment to improving roadside information, installing over 100 new timetable cases and refurbishing those in disrepair at its own expense. Sanders also continues to produce its printed timetables.

Sanders Coaches also took silver in the Bus and the Community category, impressing judges with its extensive range of community-focused activities.

Silver in the independent operator category was awarded to fellow Norfolk operator Coach Services of Thetford, for its "significant growth and strategic investment in service expansion", while bronze went to Whippet of Swavesey, completing the East Anglian dominance of the category. Judges were impressed by the high level of passenger satisfaction.

Shining from the shires

Top Shire Operator was Reading Buses, also recognised as a consistently high-performing operation. Judges applauded its innovative initiatives, such as persuading three local authorities to provide free Christmas bus travel instead of free parking.

The company also took bronze alongside Heathrow Airport in the Partnership for Excellence category, from a shortlist of ten. The partnership was commended for delivering services at non-traditional times of the day, which have proven highly popular with customers.

Second placed Shire operator was last year's UK Bus Operator of the Year, Go South Coast, which was described as "a quality operation", with consistent performance and service delivery.

Bronze went to LibertyBus of Jersey, an unusual entry as an operator technically outside of the UK. Since the nation of the Channel Islands, of which Jersey is the largest island, is a Crown Dependency, with the UK Government responsible for certain policy areas, the judges agreed that the entry from LibertyBus should be included. They said the operator demonstrated a strong community engagement and had seen success in increasing bus ridership, despite the challenge of high car ownership in its area.

Lifetimes of service

Two lifetime achievement awards were handed out this year. The first was presented at the beginning of the award ceremony by the Bus Centre for Excellence, the lifetime achievement award it had granted. Chris Cheek, a veteran public transport analyst and consultant, was announced as the winner towards the end of September, but as he was unable to collect the award in person, Leon Daniels presented it to him at the UK Bus Awards instead.

Daniels described him such: "He has been an operator, a competitor of mine in the London sightseeing market, an advisor and a consultant. He has ruthlessly told successive governments, successive departments for transport, the industry itself and individual companies the exact financial performance of this industry, and the effects of long term decline and poor return on investment."

Daniels also credited Cheek with introducing him to his future wife, who sat beside him at the second UK Bus Awards event.

The UK Bus Awards' own award for Lifetime Contribution to the Bus Industry was presented to Bill Hiron MBE, who recently sold Eastern Transport Holdings, the parent company of Stephensons of Essex and NIBS Buses, to an employee ownership trust (*Buses* December) where he still remains chair of the new organisation. He was recognised as "a powerful advocate in dealings with government and local transport authorities".

Hiron's career in the industry has spanned almost 40 years, first joining the National Bus Company as a management trainee and starting his first post-scheme appointment just a month before deregulation began in 1986. He worked at Western Travel, Stagecoach and First Bus before acquiring Stephensons of Essex in 2001. NIBS Buses was acquired in 2018.

AWARDS FOR PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY

ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

GOLD: Richard Burns - Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire
SILVER: Dennis Stuart - RATP Dev Transit London
BRONZE: Peter Collins - Stagecoach East

LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUS INDUSTRY

Bill Hiron MBE

MANAGER OF THE YEAR

GOLD: Safiyyah Saiyed - RATP Dev Transit London
SILVER: Ian de Chastelain - Stagecoach East
BRONZE: Martin Marsh - Stagecoach East
HIGHLY COMMENDED: Natalie Monaghan-Smith - Nottingham City Transport

TOP NATIONAL BUS DRIVER – SPONSORED BY *BUSES*

GOLD: Ivan Cochrane - Translink
SILVER: John O'Hara - Lothian Buses
BRONZE: Leroy Stewart - Translink

UNSUNG HERO

GOLD: Felica Patronoiu - Arriva UK Bus
SILVER: Brian Bowater - Nottingham City Transport
BRONZE: Nicholas Jago - Translink
HIGHLY COMMENDED: Dwayne Wells - Arriva Yorkshire

YOUNG MANAGER OF THE YEAR

GOLD: George Sloan - Stagecoach West
SILVER: Ben Houghton - Stagecoach London
BRONZE: Josh Tobin - Somerset Passenger Solutions

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Arriva Derby was victorious in the Top National Bus Depot award. UK BUS AWARDS

LONDON AWARDS

TOP LONDON BUS DRIVER

GOLD: Donnette Miller - RATP Dev Transit London
SILVER: Mirela Mandzhukova - Metroline
BRONZE: Efe Oyeghe - Go-Ahead London
HIGHLY COMMENDED: Diane Guirima Ide - RATP Dev Transit London

LONDON BUS GARAGE OF THE YEAR

GOLD: Westbourne Park - RATP Dev Transit London
SILVER: Tolworth - RATP Dev Transit London
BRONZE: Uxbridge - Metroline

He is well known as one of the longest serving chairs of ALBUM, a role he has held since 2018. Other ALBUM members have spoken warmly about his role in assisting small and medium-sized operators through the pandemic. He has also been a Confederation of Passenger Transport board member for nine years and was president of the organisation in 2015.

Inspiring drivers

The awards ceremony usually begins with some stories of bus driver heroics from the past year, and this tradition continued.

John Fry of First Bus Glasgow was commended for stopping his vehicle to perform CPR on a middle-aged female passenger, who collapsed out of her seat, likely saving her life. Stagecoach West Quality Inspector, Lenny Dance, provided a similar life-saving intervention on a Cheltenham racecourse shuttle service, when a 70-year-old man collapsed. The man also survived.

Nottingham City Transport driver Amanda Oglesby stopped her late night 77 service to assist a young woman she had spotted passed out on the road, seeing that she was alone and not in a position to look after herself. Arriva London driver mentor James Elsey stepped in after spotting an altercation between two passengers, a man and women. He protected the woman from the aggressive man until the police arrived, for which the female passenger was extremely grateful.

Also recognised was a team from Transport UK London Bus, who took a bus filled with humanitarian supplies to Ukraine.

In the awards themselves, Top National Bus Driver, which was sponsored by *Buses* this year, went to Ivan Cochrane of Translink, who was recognised for his exemplary service, professionalism and calm and approachable manner, which led to his appointment as a driver mentor. The judges noted how he "always goes above and beyond to ensure that a new driver is competent and confident" and feels supported in their role.

John O'Hara of Lothian Buses took the silver award, recognised for his exemplary record spanning 17 years with the business, while another Translink driver, Leroy Stewart, took bronze.

Receiving gold in the Top London Bus Driver category was Donnette Miller of RATP Dev Transit London, who stood out for her "encyclopaedic knowledge of the public transport network". She requently assists customers in finding the right bus and stop for their destination, and judges found her empathy for passengers with disabilities exemplary. She was described as an ambassador for the industry.

Metroline's Mirela Mandzhukova took silver, recognised for earning perfect scores in numerous Bus Customer Experience Surveys and receiving a commendation from a manager at another operator. Bronze went to Efe Oyeghe of Go-Ahead London, who impressed judges by securing 72 commendations over the past year, reflecting consistent excellence in service.

Deserving depots

Top National Bus Depot was won by Arriva Derby, which consistently leads Arriva's internal league tables and received top scores from a mystery traveller visit. The site has a 100% MOT pass rate, low lost mileage and minimal customer complaints.

Stagecoach East Midland's Grimsby Depot took silver, earning praise for its "Ask for Angel" scheme, which provides assistance to customers in distress. Bronze with to Stagecoach Merseyside and South Lancashire's Chester depot, judged the most deserving from a shortlist dominated by Stagecoach depots across the UK.

Gold for London Bus Garage of the Year went to RATP Dev Transit's Westbourne Park Garage, meaning the company swept to top awards in the London categories this year. It was credited with fostering an engaged and happy workforce, instrumental in creating a top-performing garage.

Tolworth, also operated by RATP Dev Transit, took the silver for its recruitment efforts, including distributing driver recruitment leaflets in Korean and appointing a Korean-speaking driver to support the application process. Metroline's Uxbridge took bronze for its involvement in the IRTE Skills Challenge and outreach to local schools and scout groups.

RATP Dev Transit also saw success in the Manager of the Year category, won by Safiyyah Saiyed from its Hounslow garage and sister site Hounslow Heath. ■

RATP Dev Transit's Westbourne Park was named London Bus Garage of the Year. UK BUS AWARDS

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EVERY
10
MINS
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HARROGATE
ELECTRIC
2211
by transdev

Alexander Dennis displayed an Enviro400EV destined for Transdev's 36 services. Fleet number 2211 (SK74 AYO) is a different vehicle to the example shown at a launch in Harrogate in June, which bore fleet number 2201 and no licence plate. JAMES DAY

AN AIR OF OPTIMISM

While the line-up of manufacturers and dealers at Euro Bus Expo 2024 was less than comprehensive, the mood of those in attendance was broadly positive, with many enjoying a successful year. **JAMES DAY** reports from the NEC

After the cancellation of Coach & Bus UK last year, the 2024 Euro Bus Expo was the first bus show held at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham for two years. However, there were some significant absences despite the break. Wrightbus, Switch Mobility and Mercedes-Benz all did not appear, and Volvo chose to offer the industry the chance to visit its own premises for a look at its range, instead of attending the show.

It meant that the line-up of vehicles was weaker than in many previous years, with the initiative given to Chinese manufacturers Yutong and BYD, who had the most recent bus products on display. However, both Van Hool and Mellor were present, in defiance of the troubles facing each of the companies earlier in the year, and Pelican and EVM took the opportunity to display the largest range of vehicles the two companies have ever presented.

Despite the absences, the manufacturers and dealers seemed positive about attendance and their interactions on the day, with several order announcements made.

There was also a running theme of success from the UK's coach suppliers, with

ELECTRIC
Enviro400EV
36
SK74 AYO

many stating that they are seeing record sales and order books filled well into 2025. This could be a sign of a recovering coach sector after tough years in the pandemic, though there was also a narrower selection of vehicles, with the previously noted absences and no Plaxton coaches making an appearance.

What follows are some of the highlights from this year's show.

COACHES AND BUSES

Alexander Dennis

Proudly shown on the Alexander Dennis stand was another example of the high-spec Enviro400EVs on their way to Transdev for the flagship 36 service, alongside a TfL-spec Enviro100EV. At the previous show, only an electric chassis had been displayed as a representative for the new range. These were joined by a diesel Enviro400 demonstrator, displayed outside.

The manufacturer has found a way to fit an additional seat into the provincial specification of the Enviro100EV to the offside, where a pair of single seats have been replaced with a single and a double. This takes seated capacity to 26, from 25. A "discovery theatre" was also a part of the stand, which visitors could enter to view a video preview of the upcoming Enviro200EV (see *Buses* December for more details). The theatre did reveal that an additional length option of 10.4m will be available for the London market. This is because of a quirk in the London bus specification's extra entrance, which allows an extra row of seats to fit into the vehicle when it is made to this length, instead of 9.9m. The 10.9m variant is unlikely to see any use in London, as there is no benefit to the extra 50cm beyond the 10.4m.

There was also a demonstration area showcasing the company's efforts to simulate bus routes and assist operators in deciding which vehicle best suits their needs.

"EVs can not always recharge overnight and run all day," said Chris Gall, Group Engineering Director. "You have to think differently when running them, and we can help operators manage that."

The modelling has proven accurate, within 5% of the simulation when tested in real world conditions, with the simulation usually on the conservative side. This means the vehicle tends to either match or perform slightly better when in service.

The company also said it has dropped the ADL Smart Seat in favour of Lazzerini as its main seating supplier.

There was veiled criticism for the manufacturers not present at the show this year. "We feel it's our duty to support the UK bus industry, put on a good show and get footfall here to support our suppliers," the company said.

Ayats

Perhaps an unexpected sight this year was Ayats, a vehicle brand only occasionally seen in the UK when its large double-deckers were imported by Ensignbus.

The Spanish company produces double-deckers and overdeckers, and is best known for high seated passenger capacity. Its low entry vehicles are integral with a Mercedes-Benz engine, with other vehicles build on a Scania chassis. This is because there is not a low floor chassis available from Scania. In other markets, the vehicles can be found on MAN chassis.

The company will be offering its Scania-based coaches through Scania in the UK, and allowing operators to order integral products direct from Spain.

Ayats was promoting its Horizon range in particular, which replaces a previous Eclipse model as the company's new standard. The Horizon Intercity variant offers up to 106 passenger seats, and the company claims it has the highest capacity per metre square on the market. The maximum size of the vehicle is 14.35m long by 2.55m wide and 4m high, with 10.5m3 of luggage capacity.

Turners Coachways is an early customer, and the display vehicle was due to travel straight to Bristol after the event. The operator is taking one Scania chassis and two integrals.

The company has exported to Italy, Luxembourg and Ireland in the past, as well as Mexico, where a dedicated finishing facility is established specifically for that market. While Ayats vehicles have been sold in the UK in the past, the company said there had been a lack of dealer interest. It feels the situation is different thanks to the relationship with Scania.

Another variant of the Horizon on a high deck is expected in the future.

BASE

Of the four vehicles on the BASE Coach Sales stand, the Beulas Cygnus for Poppletons of Pontefract was undoubtedly the most eye-catching. The 51-seater had a

TURNERS
COACHWAYS
TURNERS

An Ayats Horizon on a Scania chassis, one of three high-capacity double-deckers destined for Turners Coachways of Bristol. JAMES DAY

The Beulas Cygnus on the stand of BASE Coach Sales had the standout livery of the event, with excellent airbrushed artwork. PAUL SAVAGE

BYD's new B12 single-decker made its first appearance, in the colours of Uno of Hatfield. JAMES DAY

The Yutong U11DD was presented in First Bus livery, and has seen a number of refinements over the last three months. JAMES DAY

bespoke airbrushed design applied ahead of the event, which turned heads as visitors approached the outdoor exhibits.

The interior of the coach has seats on quick release rails, allowing space to be created for up to eight wheelchairs as required.

The dealership is linked with Holmeswood Coaches of Cheshire, which has five depots, an O-licence for 130 vehicles and an active fleet of between 90 and 100. The operator uses many of the vehicle types sold by the attached dealership, which also allows it to display coaches from its own fleet at the show.

One such vehicle was a 72-seater PSVAR-compliant Beulas Glory, on a Scania K410 chassis, chosen for its generous luggage capacity.

BASE is also the UK dealer for MOBIpeople coaches, and displayed a MOBIpeople Explorer-bodied MAN midi from the Holmeswood fleet alongside a MOBIpeople Premium on a Scania chassis, destined for KB Coaches of Stonehouse. The company claims the 36-seater Explorer is capable of 17-18mpg in fuel economy, while the Premium offered 74 seats in a 3+2 layout on two axles.

BYD

BYD has launched its all-new fully electric double-decker, which it expects to begin operating in London later this year. The BD11 is 10.9 meters long and can accommodate up to 90 passengers.

The vehicle's lithium-ion phosphate Blade Battery has a 532 kWh maximum capacity, and is installed in a lightweight battery pack designed to improve space utilisation by 50% while maintaining high levels of energy density. Using each cell as a structural beam to help withstand force, the battery also achieves high levels of strength and torsional stiffness and has a low centre of gravity to increase stability and manoeuvrability. The device is free of cobalt and other toxic metals such as nickel and magnates, and has passed the industry Nail Penetration Test, which assesses the battery's ability to withstand physical damage and to evaluate the risk of thermal runaway or other hazardous reactions.

The BD11 is driven by two 150kW electric motors. The motors use a 6-in-1 controller that simplifies the vehicle's electronics. The electric motor controls, steering control unit, air compressor controller, DC-DC converter and power distributor unit are combined into a single package.

BYD claims the vehicle can be charged from 0-100% in two hours and features multiple charging positions on the left, right and top of the vehicle. The maximum charging rate of 500kW can be achieved through pantograph charging.

A new single-decker, the B12, was also on the stand. BYD says the 11.8-metre pure-electric bus is tailored specifically to the UK market, and also utilises a Blade battery system.

It is the first provincial-spec single-decker produced by BYD for the UK as a 100% OEM, without involvement from a bodybuilder.

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FIRST SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED!

VALERIE DAVIDSON
Chief Executive,
Strathclyde Partnership
for Transport

GORDON DICKSON
Head of Bus Strategy & Delivery,
Strathclyde Partnership
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The manufacturer claims the B12 has a range of up to 310 miles and a capacity to carry up to 93 passengers.

Alongside the two buses, BYD brought a chassis to the event, allowing visitors to get a closer look at the construction of its buses.

BYD claims it is the first "new energy vehicle" manufacturer to develop its own powertrain systems, power batteries, automotive semiconductors, motors, and motor controllers. It said there are now over 2,000 BYD electric buses operating on UK roads, though the vast majority have Alexander Dennis bodywork.

Irizar

The Irizar ieTram was perhaps the most unconventional bus on display this year. The vehicle, one of those destined for Go-Ahead's Fastrack in Kent, has a new drive system with a lighter and more compact design, reducing weight by up to 26%. The lower glazing on the side panels is a controversial stylistic choice, however, with concerns raised about passenger modesty.

On the coach side, the company presented an i8 integral, a top of the range model destined for Ellisons. The company, well known for high-spec coaches often used by sports teams, will send the vehicle to AD Coach Systems for a conversion before taking final delivery.

Joining the i8 was an i6s Efficient, one of a pair destined for AAA Coaches of Livingstone, a 55- seater on a 12.9m frame. A new order was placed by West Coast Motors for a further eight of these coaches to operate from Buchanan Bus Station in Glasgow to Edinburgh Airport on Scottish Citylink's AIR service. This follows 13 other integral Irizar coaches delivered since 2022, including seven i6S Efficient coaches delivered in September.

Both vehicles are some of the last of the second generation of Irizar coaches, with a third generation now being offered. Commencing production from September 2024, the first of these coaches are due to arrive by the end of the year, and expected to provide a 5% saving in fuel consumption.

Positioned in the outside display area was an i4 12.9m to school specification, featuring 70 seats in a 3+2 layout.

Irizar UK said 2024 has been its most successful year to date, and it expects to deliver over 100 coaches to more than 35 operators by the end of the year. Success in fleet business with the Ministry of Defence and First Bus has helped the company reach this achievement, alongside the traditional retail SME operators, many with repeat orders. The company has also forged relationships with both Mistral Bus and Coach and Dawson Group for leased and rental vehicles, and repeat orders with these companies have been secured for 2025 and beyond.

Irizar UK said its 2025 orders are already surpassing this total.

The company also announced that it is developing its new headquarters near Blyth in north Nottinghamshire. The site was purchased in 2018, work was delayed due to Brexit uncertainty and the impact of Covid-19. A return to positive trading in 2023, followed by a record year in 2024, has given Irizar UK renewed confidence.

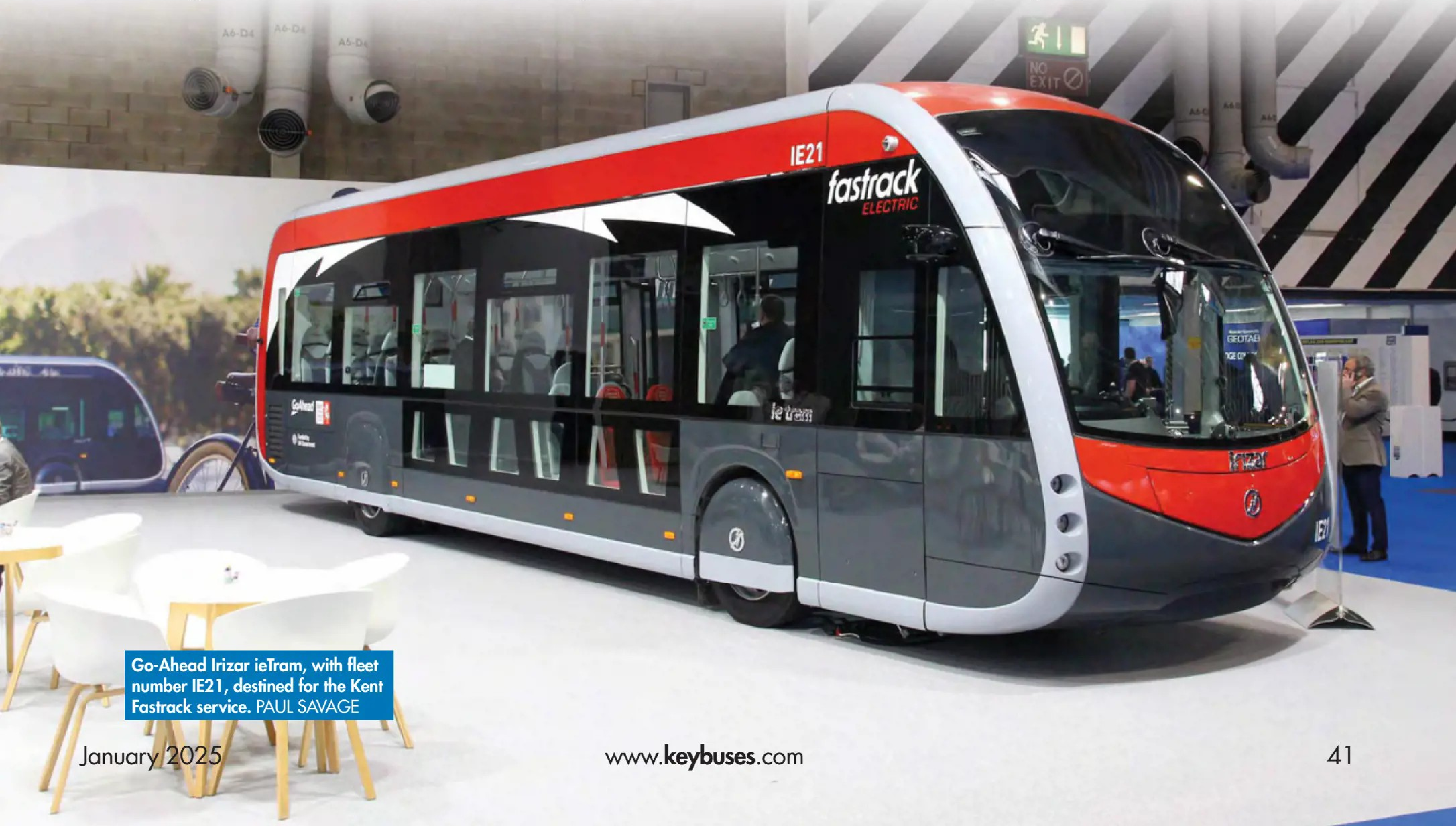
The core of the development on the four acre site will include showroom and coach handover facilities, along with office accommodation, and extensive coach parking facilities. Irizar is targeting an opening date early in the last quarter of next year.

Irizar UK's coach offering on its stand included an i8 integral for Ellisons and an i6s Efficient for AAA Coaches. JAMES DAY

Pelican Bus and Coach

Yutong importers Pelican Bus & Coach saw much interest in its U11DD double-decker, which made its first show appearance.

Since the vehicle was announced, some minor improvements have been made,



Go-Ahead Irizar ieTram, with fleet number IE21, destined for the Kent Fastrack service. PAUL SAVAGE

E12
Pelican
Bus + Coach
Stagecoach
E12

One of 155 Yutong buses on their way to Stagecoach operations, a single-decker E12. JAMES DAY

including a magnetic driver cab door to reduce rattles, an electronic handbrake and button to adjust the dashboard, instead of a foot switch. The lower saloon now has a sloped floor, eliminating one of the steps, and a sculpted ceiling, giving more headroom towards the rear.

The vehicle demonstrated was to provincial specification, with a TfL version coming in the near future. So far, 169 U11DDs have been ordered.

The double-decker was one of nine vehicles present, including an electric single-decker E12, serving as an example of the 155 buses on their way to Stagecoach.

An example of the GTe14 electric coach provided a preview of the many coaches on their way to Scottish operators, with the help of ScotZEB funding. Funding has been provided for 115 coaches, of which 100 are going to electric coach operator Ember. Other recipients include Hairy Haggis Tours (two) and Maynes of Buckie (three).

The vehicle on display featured the new Yutong digital dashboard.

Diesel coaches continue to be sold, with Trentbarton announcing an order for 21 GT12s at the show. Ten of these will renew the Red Arrow fleet, while a further 11 will be used for Flixbus work.

The company expects to deliver 450 electric buses and coaches, and a further 200 diesels, between the show and October 2025.

Scania

The Scania stand featured two coaches, a Scania Touring and another with Irizar i6 Efficient bodywork. The company said it had decided not to bring in a chassis as it has in the past, allowing more space for hospitality on its stand.

123 Hanover Displays
SCANIA IRIZAR i6S EFFICIENT
SCANIA

Scania displayed two coaches on its stand, including one with an Irizar i6s Efficient body. A similar vehicle was displayed by Irizar on its own stand. JAMES DAY

The Fencer bus, a diesel single-decker launched in 2021, was absent. However, the company said it had been putting significant development time into its future electric bus offering, wishing to continue its philosophy of providing the drivetrain of its vehicles itself as it transitions to zero emission. A low entry single-decker is expected, but the company is not rushing it to market.

Scania said it will work with another European bodybuilder, in order to offer customers more choice.

Scania's Sales Director, Mark Oliver, said: "We had the opportunity to bring electric to the UK market, but chose not to. We would have been including supporting products which had not been developed by Scania."

Like many suppliers, Scania said its coach division is performing well, with enough orders to fill its production up to September 2025. Oliver said that after the

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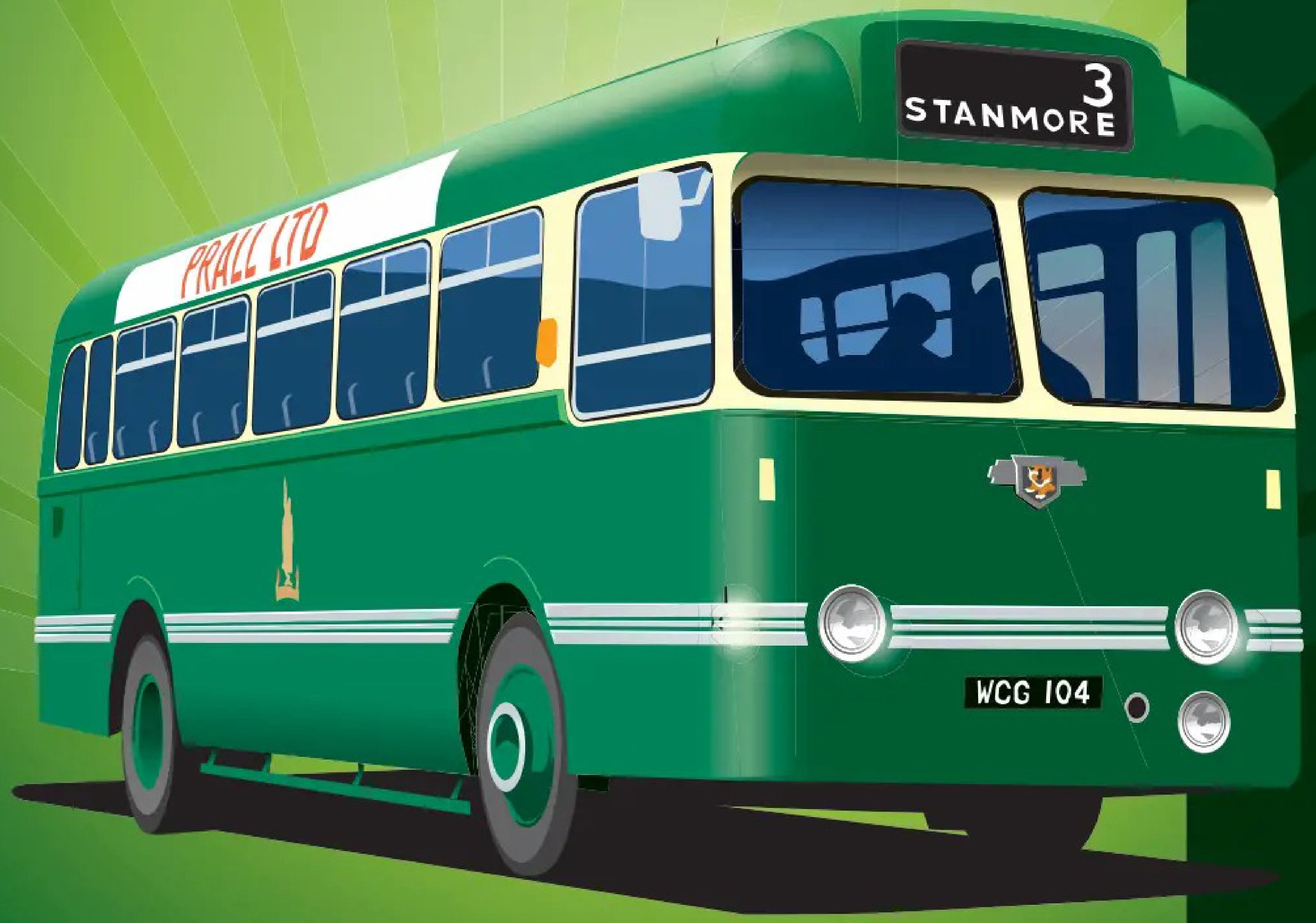
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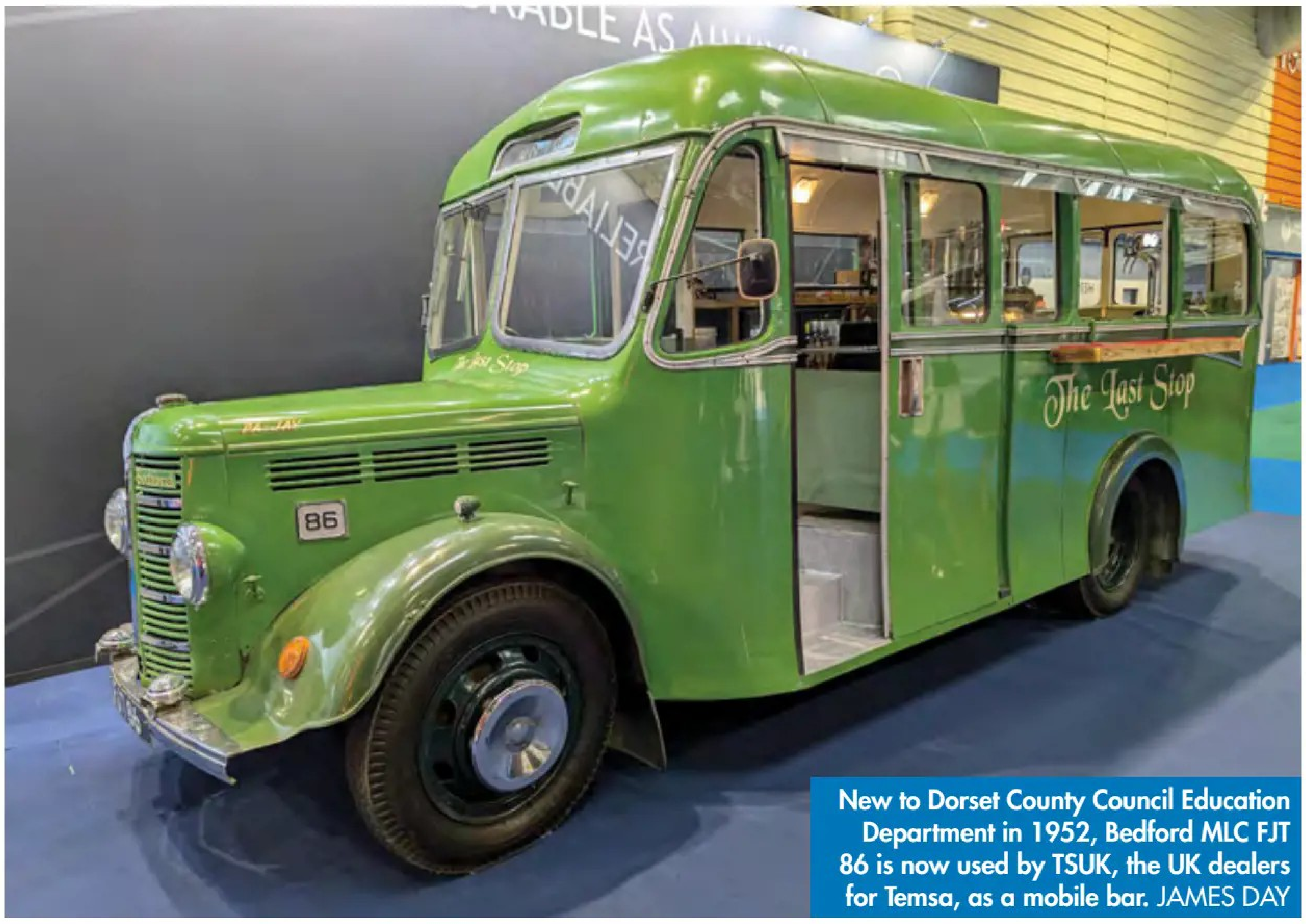


New to Dorset County Council Education Department in 1952, Bedford MLC FJT 86 is now used by TSUK, the UK dealers for Temsa, as a mobile bar. JAMES DAY

shortages all manufacturers suffered post-Covid, the industry is catching up.

More environmentally friendly coach offerings are on the way, including plug-in hybrids and electrics, expected to launch in late 2026 or early 2027.

Temsa

TSUK, the official UK dealer for Temsa, brought two coaches on its stand, a HD13 and MD9, both customer vehicles, alongside a 12m coach displayed atop Totalkare lifts elsewhere on the show floor and an additional coach outside with Asset Alliance. The rental option is a new development, an option the company has not offered before.

The MD9, utilising Cummins and ZF running gear, was a 39-seater variant without toilet onboard. The company claims this is the only vehicle of 9m length on the market capable of seating 39 passengers.

The HD13, powered by a DAF MX11 engine coupled to ZF transmission, has seen several modifications since its last show appearance, including PSVAR equipment. Perhaps most notable is the integration of the side destination panel into the bodywork of the vehicles, meaning passengers in the frontmost nearside seats now longer have an obstructed view.

The vehicle also offers new wood effect flooring on its step entrance, wide angle mirrors to reduce a blind spot to the front offside and a one-piece destination system to the front of the interior.

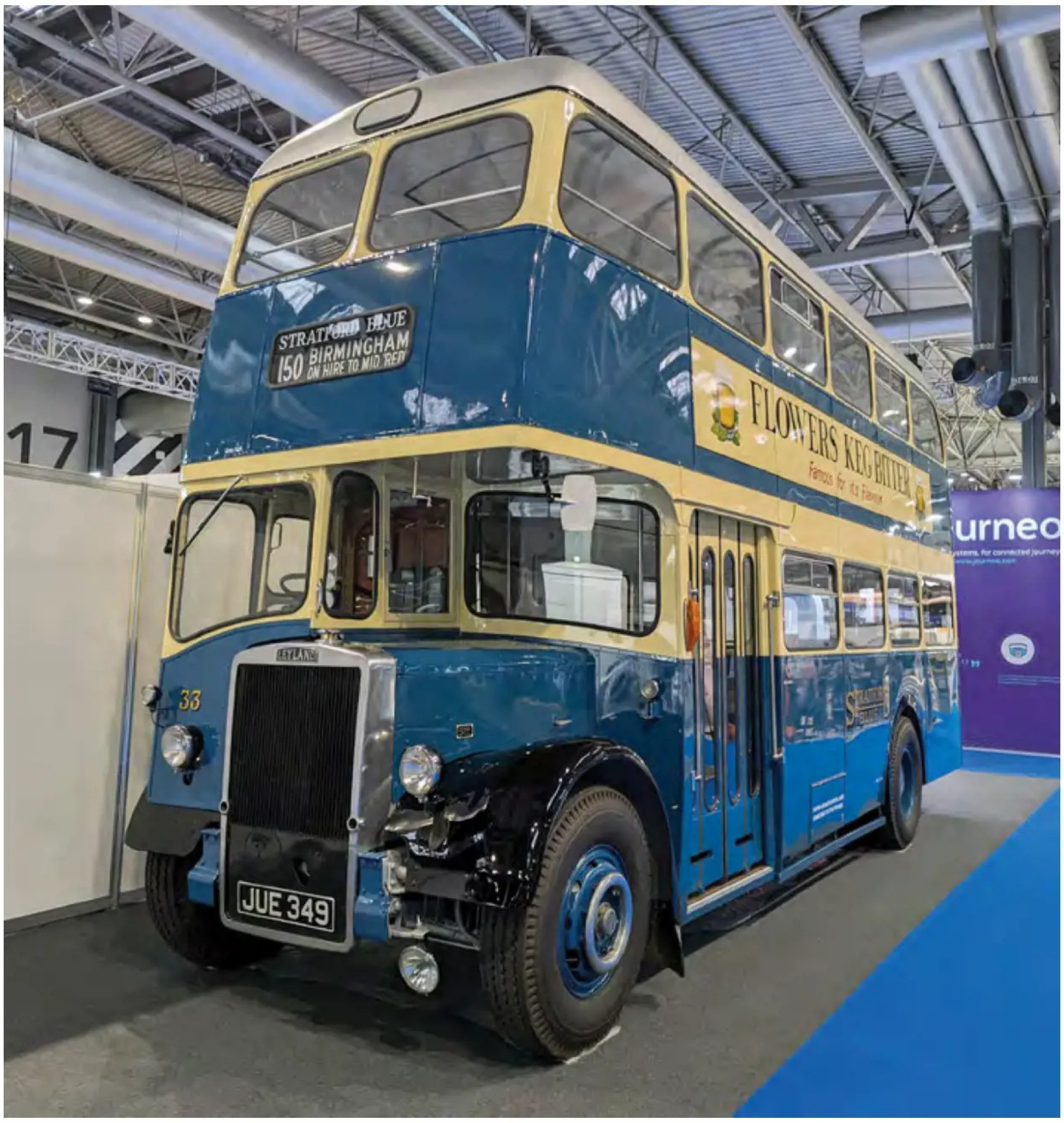
The company said it is transitioning away from standard off-the-peg specification and offering more tailored vehicles for customers. As a result, the diversity in its build schedule is much higher than seen previously, with one-off vehicles layouts throughout its order book.

This year, Temsa expects to deliver 130 units, a 50% increase on the previous 12 months. It expects a further 130 deliveries in the first five months of the following year, and aims for at least 175 deliveries by the end of 2025. The TSUK directors hope to hold a celebration for their 300th vehicle delivered under the current setup in March.

Also making an appearance on the Temsa stand was a 1952 Bedford MLC, which the company has converted into a mobile bar. It made its debut at Coachfest 2023.

LYNNS TRAVEL
EASTBOURNE
VAN HOOL
LYNNS TRAVEL
T16 AS

Van Hool TX21 Altano and T16 Astron coaches represented the troubled manufacturer, the latter destined for Lynns Travel of Eastbourne. JAMES DAY



Stratford Blue rebodied Leyland PS2 33 (JUE 349) was presented at the show independent of any specific stand, adding a touch of vintage to the fleet on modern vehicles on display. JAMES DAY

The vehicle's back doors made it ideal for bringing beer barrels aboard.

VDL / Van Hool

A Van Hool TX21 Altano coach featured this year as representatives for Van Hool, alongside a T16 Astron launched two years ago.

The company is now under the control of VDL in the wake of its collapse earlier this year.

Staff on the stand were tight-lipped, but confirmed VDL UK would be taking over all of the sales and aftersales, and "all practical things".

MINIBUSES

EVM

Irish company EVM, best known for its Mercedes-Benz Sprinter-based minibuses, had the largest stand at the event, stretching almost the entire way across one side of the hall. This reflected a busy year for the company in terms of news, with two new vehicle types joining its range.

As well as the Karsan e-Jest (see the dedicated section on this vehicle later in this article), the company is taking on the Ferqui range previously imported from Spain by Doncaster-based Connaught PSV, as the company's owner Steve Peach retires. The company has supplied Ferqui vehicles since 1997.

Peach, who turns 65 in February and has worked in the industry since 1988, said he wants to become a full-time grandpa. "I found it difficult going from 60-70 vehicles per year to 20 post-Covid," he said. "We've established a good customer base, and never come into conflict with EVM."

EVM has taken on responsibility for distributing Ferqui minibuses and midibuses in the UK, as Connaught PSV prepares to close. A Ferqui Sunrise-bodied Iveco Daily undergoes final preparation before the show opens. JAMES DAY

The Connaught PSV premises was rented by the company, and will not remain open under EVM control.

EVM has already been supplying Ferqui vehicles to the Irish market, and taking over the distribution on for the UK felt like a natural progression, it said. It will offer the Ferqui Soroco and Sunset.

EVM will also be transferring bodybuilding responsibility for its 33-seater Iveco e-Daily offering to Ferqui.

Regarding the e-Jest, EVM said it had seen interest from care homes and national transport groups, and said while the product is new to the UK, it is proven elsewhere.

Karsan

Türkiye-based manufacturer Karsan has decided to enter the UK market with its e-Jest minibus, which will be exclusively distributed by EVM.

The company has vehicles in service all over the world, with its entry into the Japanese market providing the opportunity to produce right-hand drive vehicles.

The 5.8m long e-Jest looks at first glance like an autonomous pod, seen in trials across the world, but is larger and can carry substantially more passengers than are usually seen on them, with a maximum capacity of 22. The vehicle has an estimated maximum range of 130 miles, and can be charged in four hours at AC 22kW, or 65 minutes at DC 80kW. The vehicle is powered by a BMW motor, and based on a Fiat Ducato, which the company said was a unique combination.

The company is aiming for a "sweet spot" between a taxi and a bus, and targeting on demand or night services with lower passenger volumes, along with low-density commuter services. The e-Jest's wide door and ramp makes it quite accessible for wheelchair-bound passengers.

During a press conference, Karsan claimed the vehicle can be driven on a standard car licence. However, it is unlikely the e-Jest can be driven for hire and reward at anything near its maximum capacity under UK law without a PSV licence.

KARSAN e-JEST
e-JEST
100% ELECTRIC

The Karsan e-Jest, a 5.8m minibus capable of carrying up to 22 passengers, was launched at a press conference on the first day. JAMES DAY

Mellor

Rochdale-based Mellor returned to its roots of minibuses and small buses, now that the company has ceased offering the electric Sigma range. The company has also dropped the electric Orion E minibus since its takeover in January, deciding that it wasn't right for the community transport or social enterprise market a vehicle of its size is aimed at. Electric vehicles need to be used constantly to justify the cost, and such organisations do not always run so regularly.

Mellor's stand featured a trio of minibuses, including a Mellor Strata-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter in the colours of the Bee Network, where the company has seen some success. First has ordered 17, Stagecoach four, and Diamond has three in service, with a further three due in December. The example at the show was the first Strata for Go North West.

The Bee Network's specification is a departure from the usual offering. Usually, the choice is a standard Strata (21 seated, one standing - to avoid the vehicle gaining Class B classification), Strata Plus (23 seated, three standing) or Strata Ultra (27 seated, three standing). The Bee Network spec instead has a space for 19 seated and nine standing (16 seated if the wheelchair bay is in use).

A Strata Ultra, destined for Dumfries and Galloway, was another of the vehicles on show.

The company described the Strata as a "10 year bus", a better diesel option than a full size vehicle expected to last 15 years. The company argued that, with the zero emission deadline approaching in eight years, getting a return on investment in that time from such a large vehicle would be much more difficult, whereas a Strata would earn its cost back in BSOG payments in three years.

BEE NETWORK
STRATA LF

The Mellor Strata in Bee Network livery has a specification which diverges from the company's usual offering, with a greater proportion of is max loading taken up by standees. JAMES DAY

TBC Conversions

TBC Conversions from Dungannon in Northern Ireland unveiled a nine-seater electric accessible minibus.

The minibus, built on a Ford Transit with Ford's technical input, has a stated range of almost 200 miles, and is intended to be fully charged overnight.

The vehicle features quick-release seating, an electrically operated cantilever step, and options for inboard and under-floor lifts.

TBC also exhibited the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 17-seater accessible minibus, now compatible with Hydrogenated/Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). ■

Cummins
13 SEAT ACCESSIBLE ELECTRIC MINIBUS
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TBC Conversions launched a nine-seater electric minibus, build on a Ford Transit. PAUL SAVAGE

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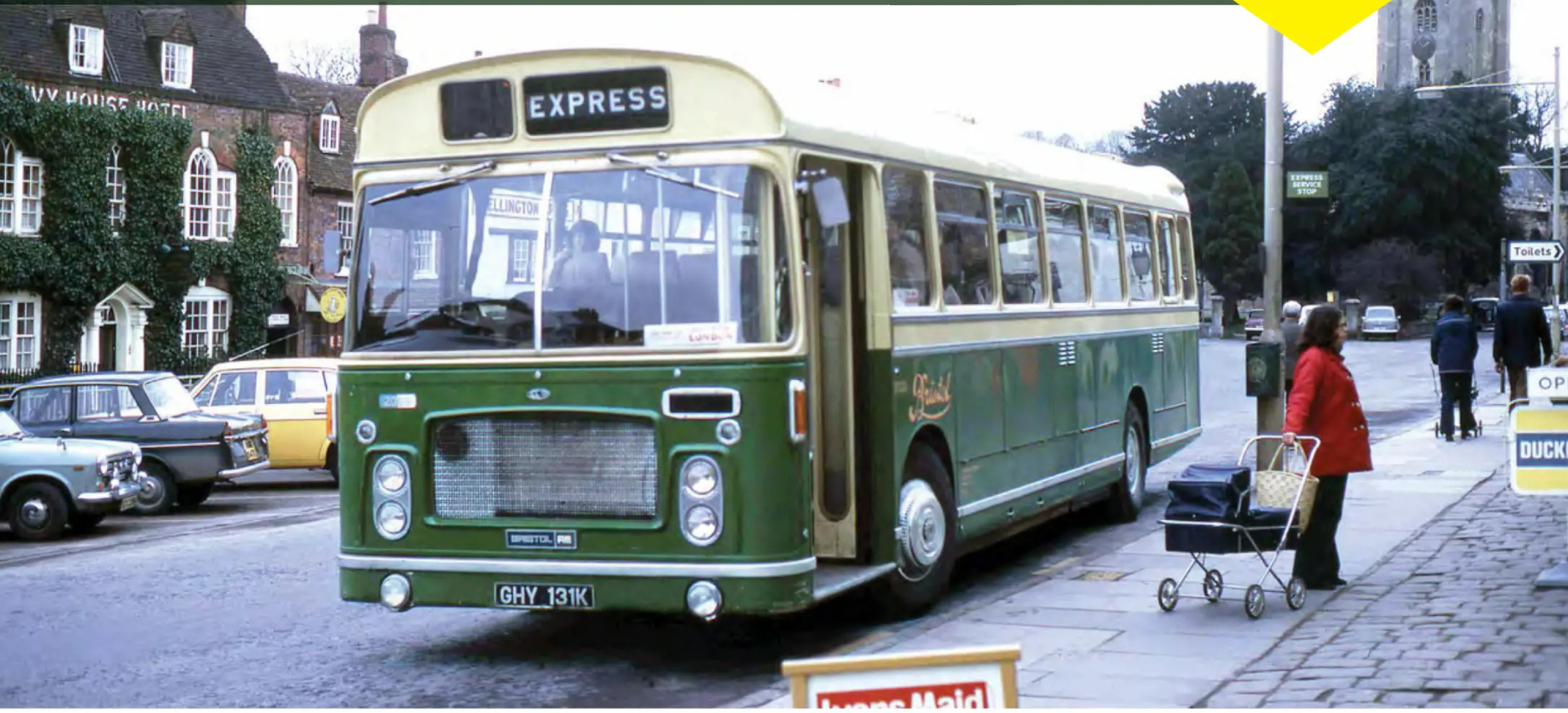
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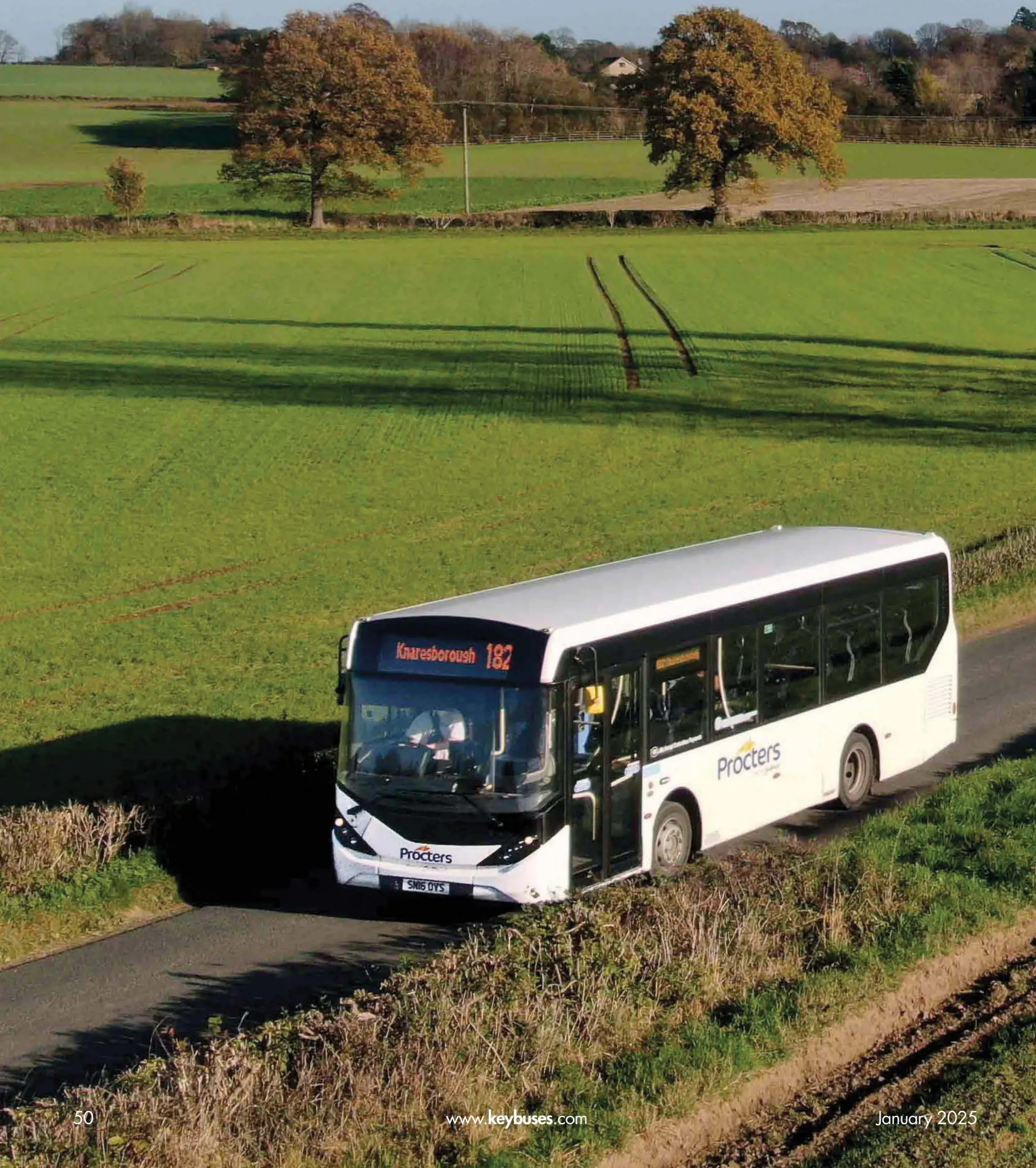
063/25

Photo: Lewis Welham

RURAL CONNECTION

East Yorkshire has been operating some tendered services to the West of York and around Ripon / Knaresborough for a few months. One of these services, the 182 from Knaresborough to Ripon, has been passed over to Procters Coaches, which was recently acquired by Go Ahead / EY. The name on a number of buses appears to be changing from the Dales & District brand to Procters, with the "part of Go Ahead" slogan under the name. This Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC is operating the new route 182 seen between Ferrensby and Farnham on the first day of operation. This was originally a United bus operating area from the Ripon garage. DANIEL STAZICKER



UK TROLLEYBUS PRESERVATION
A SUCCESS STORY

A wide and almost comprehensive selection of 1960s British trolleybuses survives in preservation. **ANDREW FIELDSEND** examines which vehicles survive to this day

The last British trolleybus system, in Bradford, closed on March 26, 1972, just over 50 years ago. At that time, bus preservation was still quite a new activity with few resources available to support it, while for trolleybuses there was the added challenge that they required their own infrastructure to operate.

One consequence of the Bradford closure is that since then, very few British trolleybuses have become available for preservation. This means that preservationists have focussed on accommodating, restoring and running a relatively small selection of vehicles (currently just over 110) rather than on acquiring more.

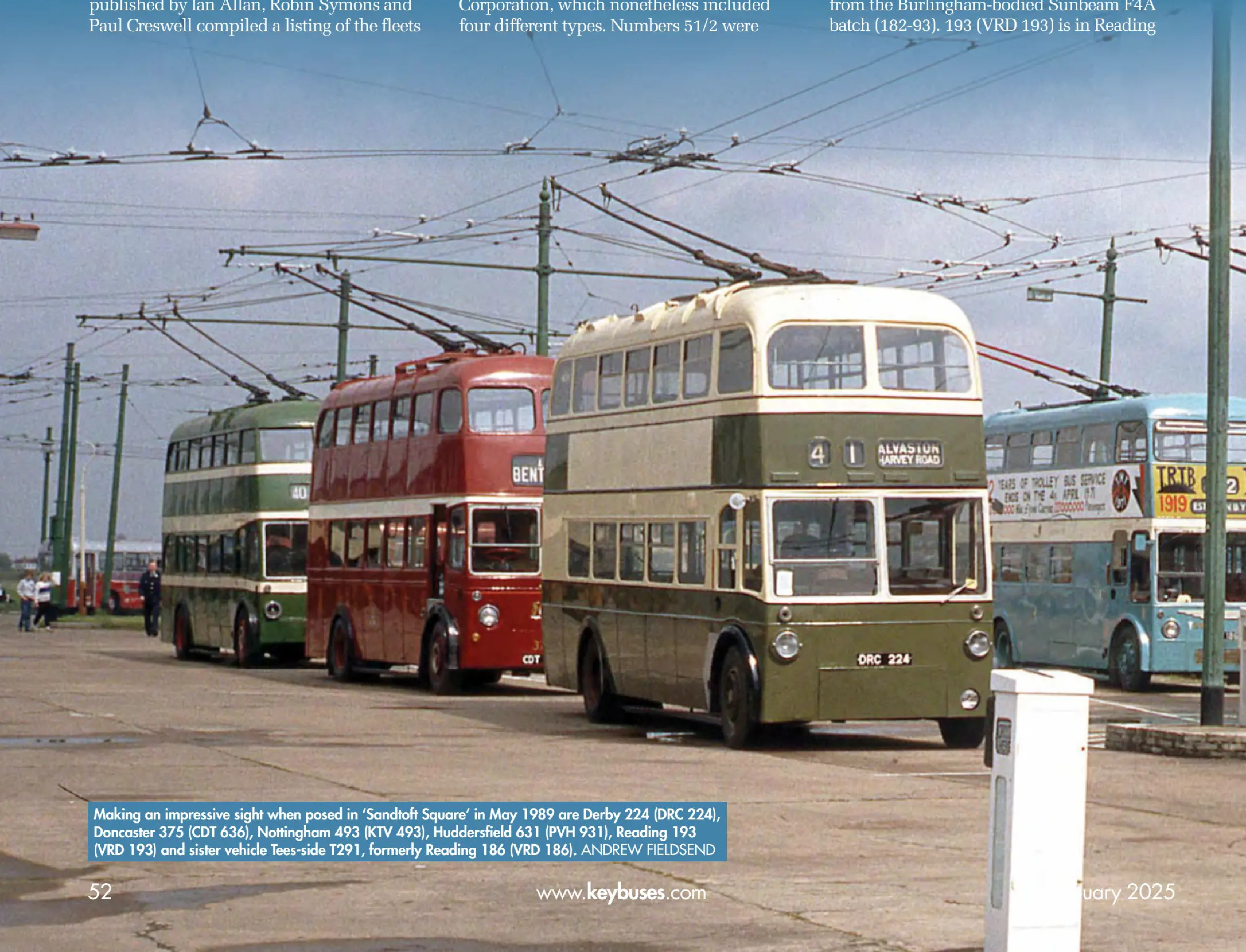
Despite this small number and the timing of the Bradford closure, the collection of preserved UK trolleybuses is remarkably varied. In their book British Trolleybuses, published by Ian Allan, Robin Symons and Paul Creswell compiled a listing of the fleets of current operators as of late 1966, plus those of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Nottingham at the time of closure. This article surveys the extent to which these fleets are (or have been) represented in preservation.

Southern silent-servants

Three systems were still in operation in southern England in late 1966. At that time, Bournemouth Corporation had a near-standard fleet of 29 Sunbeam MF2B trolleybuses with dual-doorway Weymann bodies from three batches, fleet numbers 268-277, 278-87 and 295-303. None of the first (WRU-registered) batch survive, but from the second, 286 (YLJ 286) is still extant. From the final batch, 297/9/301 (297/9/301 LJ) are preserved.

One of the smallest surviving fleets, with 16 trolleybuses, was that of Maidstone Corporation, which nonetheless included four different types. Numbers 51/2 were Weymann-bodied BUT 9611T acquired from Brighton Corporation and 52 (LCD 52) is preserved. 54-58, Sunbeam W with Roe bodies, are represented by 56 (GKP 511) while 72 (HKR 11) survives from the Northern Coachbuilders-bodied batch of Sunbeam W numbered 62-73. Also with Sunbeam W chassis, but MCW bodies, 86-89 were new to Hastings Tramways and acquired from Maidstone and District. Number 86 (BDY 809) is preserved as Hastings Tramways 34.

In late 1966, the three surviving batches of Reading Corporation trolleybuses amounted to 44 vehicles. Of the Park Royal-bodied BUT 9611T trolleybuses (138-57), 144 (DRD 130) is preserved. There are two representatives of the Park Royal-bodied Sunbeam S7 type (170-81) in preservation, 174 (ERD 145) and 181 (ERD 152), and similarly two survivors from the Burlingham-bodied Sunbeam F4A batch (182-93). 193 (VRD 193) is in Reading



Making an impressive sight when posed in 'Sandtoft Square' in May 1989 are Derby 224 (DRC 224), Doncaster 375 (CDT 636), Nottingham 493 (KTV 493), Huddersfield 631 (PVH 931), Reading 193 (VRD 193) and sister vehicle Tees-side T291, formerly Reading 186 (VRD 186). ANDREW FIELDSEND livery but 186 (VRD 186) is preserved as Teesside Municipal Transport 11, this being its final operator.

Variance from the Midlands

Four trolleybus systems in the Midlands are listed in the book. The 48 vehicles in the Derby Corporation fleet came from three batches, 189…215, Sunbeam F4 with Brush bodies, 216-35, also Sunbeam F4 but with Willowbrook bodies, and 236-43, Roe-bodied Sunbeam F4A. Number 215 (ARC 515) represents the first batch in preservation, 224 (DRC 224) survives from the second batch and 237 (SCH 237) is preserved from the third batch.

Only 17 vehicles of the 500-24 batch of BUT 9641T with Brush bodies are listed as being in stock when the Nottingham City Transport system closed on June 30, 1966. Of these, number 506 (KTV 506) survives, as does 502 (KTV 502) which was withdrawn just before closure.

Walsall Corporation had a famously varied fleet and not all types from among the 55 vehicles exist in preservation. None of the ex-Maidstone and District (new to Hastings Tramways) batch of Sunbeam W with Weymann bodywork (303-10) were kept, although sister vehicle BDY 809 survives, as mentioned earlier. From the 334-43 batch of Brush-bodied Sunbeam F4, only the non-typical 342 (NDH 959), which was lengthened and rebuilt, is preserved while the unique 350 (RDH 990), a Willowbrook-bodied Sunbeam S7, was scrapped. From among numbers 344-7/51-4, the ex-Ipswich Corporation Park Royal-bodied F4, 347 (ADX 196) has been restored in its original guise as Ipswich 126.

Of the two Crossley Empire TDD43/2 with Roe bodies (850/73) which were ex-Grimsby-Cleethorpes but new to Cleethorpes Corporation, 850 (HBE 541) was preserved for several years, but later scrapped in probably the most shameful act in UK trolleybus preservation history. 864 (TDH 914) from the famous batch of Willowbrook-bodied Sunbeam F4A (851-72) was also preserved but then scrapped, but 862 (TDH 912) and 872 (XDH 72) survive. From the four ex-Grimsby-Cleethorpes Northern Coachbuilders-bodied BUT 9611T (874-7, also new to Cleethorpes), 874 (GFU 692), the only one of the four not to be lengthened and converted to front entrance while in Walsall, will be restored as Grimsby-Cleethorpes 159.

The 28 remaining Wolverhampton Corporation trolleybuses were Roe-bodied Sunbeam W numbered 424…455. The survivor is number 433 (DUK 833).

The Bradford fleet

Two Yorkshire trolleybus systems were still running in late 1966, of which Bradford City Transport had the largest fleet, totalling 137 vehicles. Many of these were second-hand and/or rebodied. The batches which were fitted with new East Lancs rear-entrance bodies in the period 1956-8 are not represented in preservation. These were as follows: 589-96, AEC 661T acquired from Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Traction Co.; 634…76, AEC 661T bought new; 693-702, Sunbeam MF2, ordered by Johannesburg but diverted to Bradford in 1942; 715-20/2-4/7, Karrier W bought new; and 775-84, Karrier W acquired from Llanelly and District. It is a notable omission that no Bradford rear-entrance East Lancs rebodies were preserved.

By contrast, several examples of the 703-14 batch of Karrier W rebodied with front-entrance East Lancs bodies were preserved, unsurprisingly since these vehicles comprised much of the fleet at the time of closure. The trolleybuses concerned are 703/4/6/11-3 (DKY 703/4/6/11-3). 731/5/7 (DKY 731/5/7), front-entrance East Lancs rebodies from the mixed 720-39 batch of Karrier W were also preserved. This extensive duplication was not strictly necessary and 711/31 have since been scrapped. 712 still exists, but is no longer in preservation and the body of 713 is currently being dismantled for spares. 728 (DKY 728) was kept for many years by Autospares of Bingley as a preservation candidate, but has since been scrapped. DKY 735 now carries Walsall Corporation livery (although it never ran for them) but is still numbered 735.

Numbers 740-51 were BUT 9611T, which retained their original Roe bodies, and 743/6 (EKU 743/6 are preserved. Of the Weymann-bodied batch of BUT 9611T numbered 752-9, 758 (FKU 758) survives. Numbers 761…774, the ex-Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Traction Co. BUT 9611T, also kept their original Weymann bodies until

17
73
OUTLANE
via MARSH
631
PVH 931
KEEP LEFT

17
WOKINGHAM ROAD
174
ERD 145

Reading 174 (ERD 145) was exhibited when new at the 1950 Commercial Motor Show in London and for this reason was fitted with chrome-plated windscreen frames - those of the others of the batch were painted. Seen here at the Black Country Museum, it is currently kept at Sandtoft. ANDREW FIELDSEND

withdrawal and preserved NNU 234/8 have regained their initial identities as Notts and Derby 353/7. Another vehicle to reassume its original identity in preservation is St. Helens Corporation 387 (BDJ 387), latterly Bradford 799 as one of a batch of East Lancs-bodied BUT 9611T numbered 794-801.

The 785-93 batch of Karrier W were new to Darlington Corporation as single-deckers and acquired new East Lancs front-entrance bodies in Bradford. 792 (GHN 574) is preserved. BUT 9611T 831-5 were also new to Darlington Corporation but were acquired by Bradford from Doncaster Corporation and were also fitted with new East Lancs front-entrance bodies. Two of the batch survive: 834/5 (LHN 784/5). Also originally single-deckers and similarly rebodied were ex-Mexborough and Swinton Traction Co. Sunbeam F4 841-7. Four of the batch are still in existence: 844-7 (FWX 914; JWW 375-7). 843 (FWX 913) was preserved for some years but then scrapped. 842 (FWX 912) was bought by preservationists for spare parts while 841 (FWX 911) was also retained for a while by Autospares of Bingley. Eventually scrapped, its motor survives in South Yorkshire PTE Dennis/Alexander trolleybus 2450.

All 36 Huddersfield Corporation trolleybuses still in stock had East Lancs bodies. Numbers 543/6/8 and 582-5 were rebodied Karrier/Sunbeam MS2 and although none survive in this form, sister vehicle 541 (CVH 741), which retains its original Park Royal body, is preserved. 619 (KVH 219) is the remaining representative of two batches of BUT 9641T (GVH-registered 612-8 and KVH-registered 619-30), while 631 (PVH 931), which is of very similar appearance but has a Sunbeam S7 chassis, survives from the 631-40 batch of trolleybuses.

Northern survivors

By late 1966, very few trolleybuses remained in service elsewhere in northern England. Ashton-under-Lyne Corporation was operating just eight Bond-bodied BUT 9612T (82-9), of which 87 (YTE 826) is preserved. The neighbouring Manchester Corporation fleet had contracted to just 31 of the Burlingham-bodied BUT 9612T trolleybuses (1301…62). None of these 31 survive but the batch is represented in preservation by 1344 (ONE 744).

The Newcastle-upon-Tyne system had closed on October 1, 1966, when the fleet consisted of 39 BUT 9641T trolleybuses with Metro-Cammell bodies numbered 580…628. Numerically the last of these, 628 (NBB 628) is preserved. When British Trolleybuses was published, the Tees-side Railless Traction Board still existed and operated 15 trolleybuses, all recently rebodied by Roe. Numbers 1-7 had Sunbeam F4 chassis and, of these, 2 (GAJ 12) and 5 (GAJ 15) survive but none of the batch of Sunbeam W (10-3/5-8) were preserved. As mentioned above, ex-Reading VRD 186 has been restored in its Teesside Municipal Transport livery.

In Scotland, the City of Glasgow Corporation by late 1966 had a standardised and modern fleet of 85 trolleybuses. These included the last remaining single-deckers (TBS12…21) in use in the UK, BUT RETB-1 with Burlingham bodies, of which two entered preservation. TBS13 (FYS 988) still exists but regrettably TBS21 (FYS 996) was scrapped some years ago. Of the large fleet of Crossley-bodied BUT 9613T (TB35-124), just TB78 (FYS 839) survives.

Outside England

City of Cardiff Transport operated the sole remaining Welsh trolleybus system with 40 BUT 9641T vehicles. Numbers 211…30 and 249/50 had East Lancs bodywork which was dual door when new but later converted to rear entrance only. The representative in preservation is 215 (DBO 475). The 251…262 batch had Bruce bodies (which were also

BARMING
BULL INN
USED CARS
56
GKP 511

The Black Country Museum provides several opportunities for photogenic views. Long-time Sandtoft resident Maidstone 56 (GKP 511), a Sunbeam W of 1944 vintage, originally carried a Park Royal 56-seat 'utility' body but received a new 62-seat Roe body in 1960. ANDREW FIELDSEND

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064/25

Passengers have boarded Nottingham 506 (KTV 506) in 'Sandtoft Square' in preparation for service on August 25, 2019. One of a batch of 25 trolleybuses built to 8ft wide specification, similar vehicles in the fleet being six inches narrower, 506 was Nottingham's official last trolleybus. ANDREW FIELDSEND

Freshly repainted into Notts & Derby livery, NNU 234 was at the time resident at Mallard Road, Bournemouth and is seen on display at the 1986 open day. The large collection of preserved vehicles in Bournemouth was later dispersed and no. 353 eventually moved to Sandtoft. ANDREW FIELDSEND

Despite having been withdrawn in July 1964 and subsequently purchased for preservation, no. 1344 (ONE 944), an unusual BUT 9612T, was the very last trolleybus to operate in Manchester, on December 31, 1966. It is now resident at Sandtoft, where it was photographed on August 14, 2024. ANDREW FIELDSEND

dual door when new) built on East Lancs frames and 262 (EBO 919) survives. None of the final batch of East Lancs-bodied trolleybuses (275-87) survives. In fact, 284 (KBO 957) was purchased by preservationists but was never intended for preservation. The top deck was scrapped immediately, followed by the lower deck and chassis some years later after use as a store.

All remaining 69 trolleybuses in the Belfast Corporation fleet carried Harkness bodywork. The oldest batches (108…27 and 144…83) were Guy BTX and one from each batch, namely 112 (FZ 7897) and 168 (GZ 8532), have survived. Number 183 (GZ 8547) was also in preservation for many years and has only recently been scrapped. The two batches of BUT 9641T trolleybuses (187…210 and 211-34) are not represented in preservation, this being another major gap in an otherwise comprehensive collection of preserved trolleybuses. Finally, the unique Sunbeam F4A, 246 (2206 OI) was also saved for posterity.

Success in preservation

UK trolleybus preservation can be considered a success story for two main reasons. The first is the sheer representativeness in preservation

Resplendent in its 'last trolleybus' livery, Bradford 844 (FWX 914) is part of the Keighley Bus Museum collection but on March 20, 2022 it was resident at Sandtoft. Behind is London Transport 1348 (EXV 348), which is on long-term loan from the Transport Museum Society of Ireland. ANDREW FIELDSEND

of the vehicles that were in service in late 1966 and which had all been withdrawn by early 1972. Remarkably, or perhaps as a consequence, this was achieved despite the fragmentation and a certain amount of acrimony that plagued the trolleybus preservation movement around that time. As we have seen, there are very few major gaps from 1966 in the surviving collection.

Secondly, despite early and not inconsiderable difficulties in finding secure accommodation and several false starts regarding potential museum schemes, very few preserved trolleybuses have been scrapped. This article refers to 65 trolleybuses listed in British Trolleybuses that were acquired for preservation, including Manchester 1344 and Nottingham 502, but excluding Huddersfield 541. Of these, nine have since been scrapped or otherwise lost to preservation, namely Belfast 183, Bradford 711-3, 731 and 843, Glasgow TBS21, and Walsall 850 and 872. All except Walsall 850 were duplicates of vehicles that are still preserved.

Some of these vehicles have been carefully maintained since entering preservation while, at the other extreme, others have deteriorated badly over time. But many trolleybuses have now been restored and several museums can run them in service for the public. Foremost among these is Sandtoft Transport Centre in North Lincolnshire, where 25 of the trolleybuses are presently based (although not all are on public display). Carlton Coville in Suffolk accounts for eight trolleybuses while the Black Country Living Museum in the West Midlands, which has a strict regional collections policy, is home to three. The amicable relationships now existing between preservation groups means that transfers between locations occur regularly.

> *There are very few major gaps from 1966 in the surviving collection*

Of the four mentioned non-preservation candidates, i.e. Bradford 728 and 841-2 and Cardiff 284, only the latter would have filled a real gap in the preservation record. The 56 surviving trolleybuses all remain in the UK (a plan to export a Bradford trolleybus to New Zealand did not come to fruition) and are joined in preservation by a similar number withdrawn earlier.

Additional vehicles

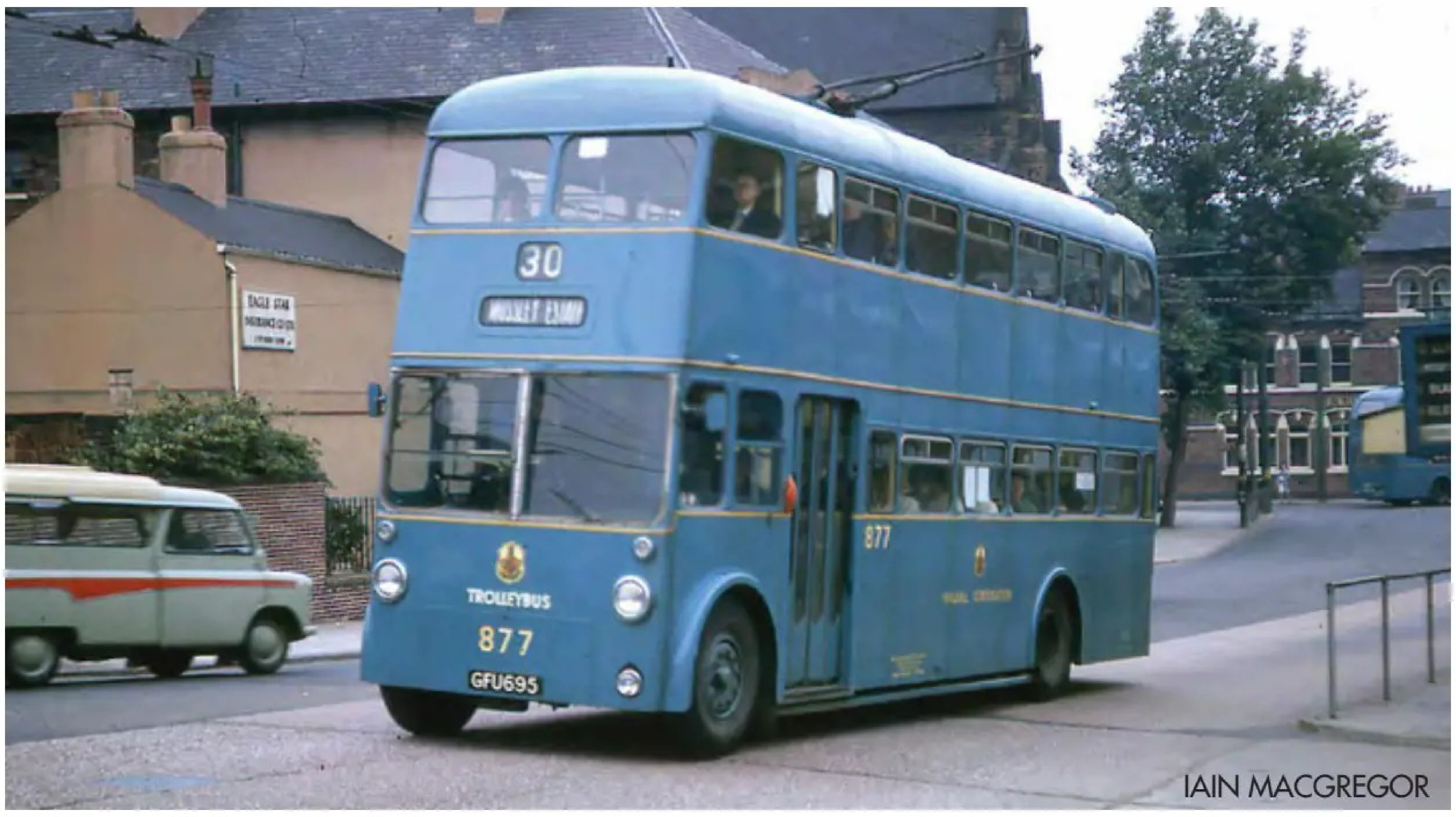
Although the focus of this article was the 16 systems listed in British Trolleybuses, one other major group of UK trolleybuses that was also extant in early 1966 is worthy of mention here. In 1961, 125 of the 127 London Transport Q1 class Metro-Cammell-bodied BUT 9641T trolleybuses (1765-891) were exported to Spain after early withdrawal. Non-standard number 1841 (HYM 841) was scrapped and 1768 (HYM 768) was preserved by London Transport.

While some of the exported trolleybuses never entered service in Spain, others had quite long operational lives and indeed Q1s continued to run in La Coruña until January 4, 1979. Four of these Q1 trolleybuses have been preserved, including three in Spain. They are 1836/9 (HYM 836/9), preserved as Zaragoza 72/5 respectively, and 1837 (HYM 837), ex-Zaragoza 73, restored as San Sebastian 73. 1812 (HYM 812), latterly Santander-Astillero 8, was repatriated to the UK and restored to London condition. It now regularly operates in service at Sandtoft. ■

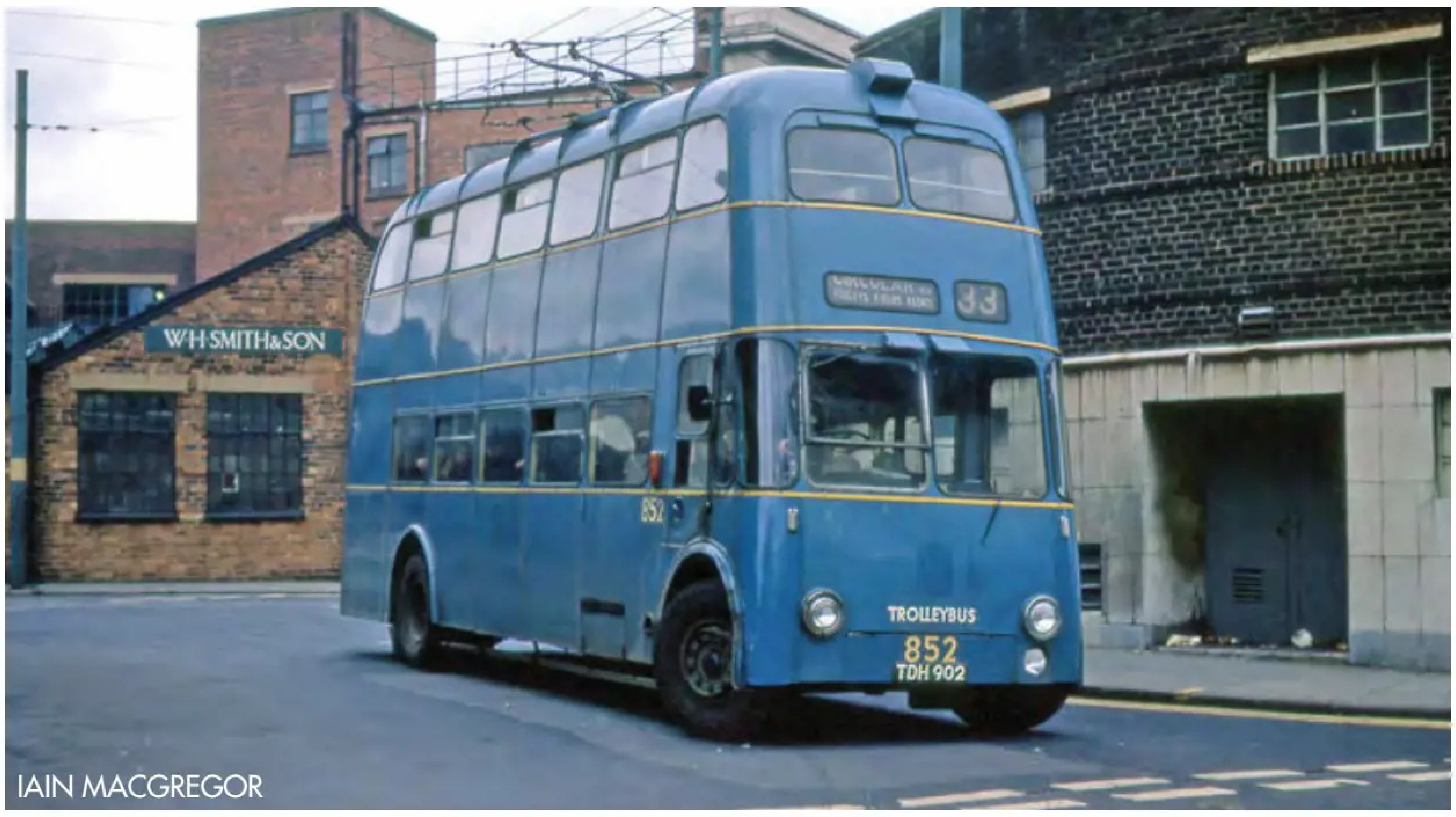
MATHER'S
BLACK BEER
25
NAB WOOD
BRADFORD
746
EKU 746
THE
REGAL
CINEMA

WIRED-UP WALSALL

Trolleybuses lasted longer in one West Midlands town than in most parts of the country, long enough to play a unique part in the history of the passenger transport executives



IAIN MACGREGOR



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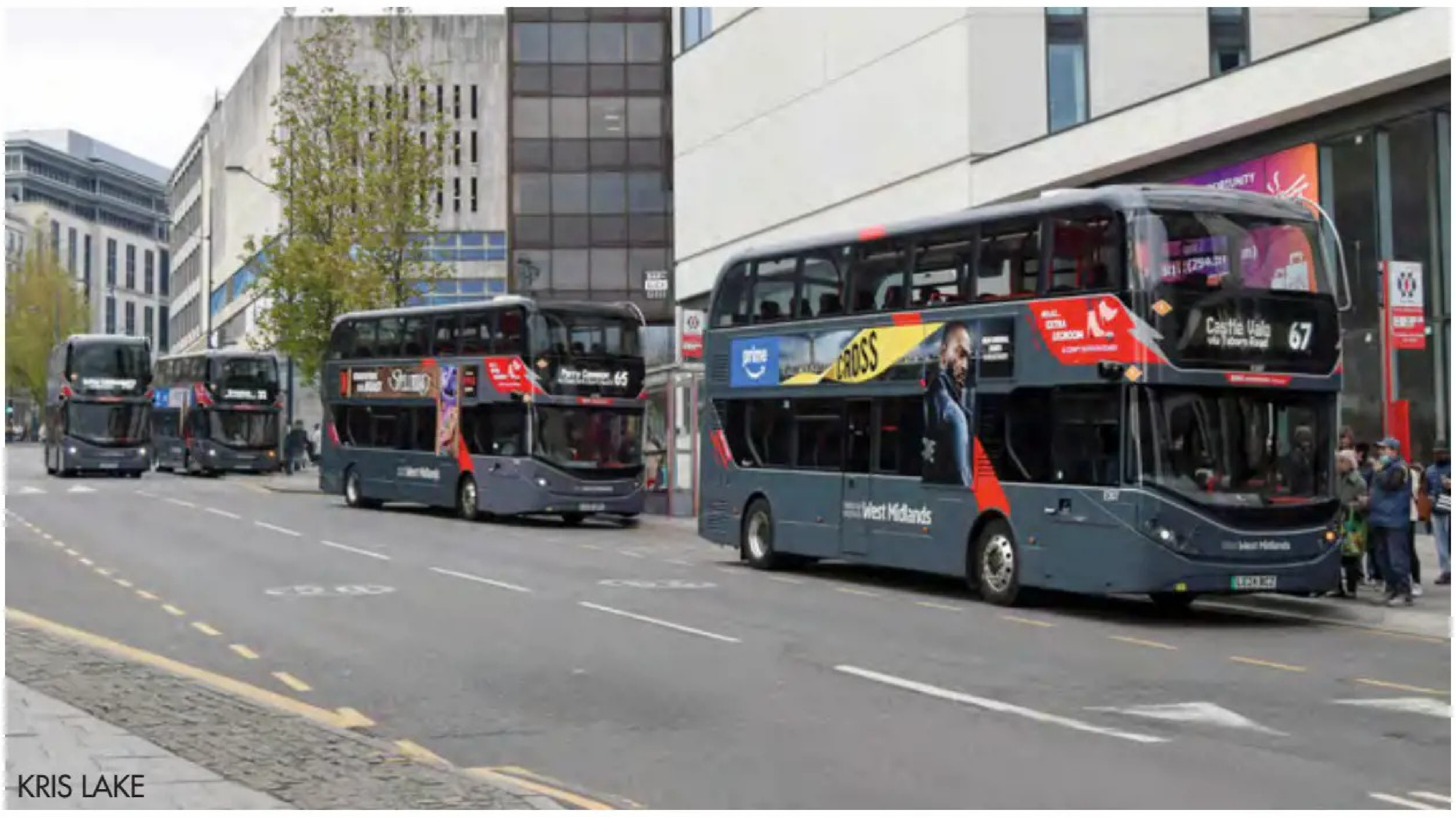


KRIS LAKE

With over 300 BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City double-deckers in Birmingham and Coventry, National Express West Midlands has one of the largest battery electric bus fleets outside London. But they are not the region's first electrics. Three municipal operators absorbed by the new West Midlands PTE in October 1969 ran trolleybuses and one still had them, making this the only PTE to operate them, if only for 12 months.

Birmingham was the first to operate and abandon trolleybuses. They served two unconnected corridors. The 2.5mile Nechells route ran from November 1922 to September 1940, the longer Coventry Road corridor from January 1934 to June 1951. The fleet peaked at 78.

Wolverhampton's was the largest fleet and longest lasting system of the three, running from October 1923 to March 1967 with a peak of 173 vehicles, the seventh largest outside London. It also bought more new trolleybuses — 354 — than anyone other than London Transport.

But it was Walsall that championed the trolleybus against the odds. Ronald Edgley Cox, general manager from June 1952, spearheaded its expansion when not only Birmingham, but also the mighty London Transport was set on abandonment.

There were two routes covering almost 6miles when he arrived, west to Willenhall and north to Bloxwich, introduced between July 1931 and October 1933 to replace Walsall's last trams. The network grew to six routes over 30miles between June 1955 and September 1963, the fleet to 60 double-deckers — 23 bought new between 1953 and 1956, 24 secondhand between 1955 and 1962.

There were plans for further expansion in 1969 and for one-person operation using redundant Sunbeam MF2B double-deckers from Bournemouth, but these came to nothing. The system closed in October 1970, leaving Teesside and Bradford with Britain's last trolleybuses. Cox became the PTE's director of engineering.

The trolleybus that Iain MacGregor photographed in September 1962, 877 (GFU 695), was one of four Northern Coachbuilders-bodied BUT 9611Ts purchased from Grimsby-Cleethorpes in 1960 and new to Cleethorpes Corporation in 1950. Walsall extended three of them to 30ft with forward entrance and staircase instead of rear; 877 was the first of these conversions, its seating capacity increased from 54 to 67.

He visited again in September 1970, 17 days before the end. The PTE had removed the Walsall Corporation name and coats of arms but stopped short of applying its WM logo. Willowbrook-bodied 852 (TDH 902) was the second of 15 Sunbeam F4As new in 1955. These 70-seaters were 29ft 6in long, then the country's longest two-axle double-deckers (trolleybus or motorbus), authorised before the length limit was increased to 30ft in 1956. Seven more followed in 1956 and, after an accident, one of those was rebuilt with a forward entrance and staircase as late as June 1969.

Kris Lake's picture, taken in November, shows four of the Enviro400EVs, led by Perry Barr-based E307 (LE24 BCZ), in Priory Queensway in central Birmingham. ■

LAG tried to sell its Tristar as an executive minicoach and later as a service bus, but only found UK customers for two of them which **GRAHAM ASHWORTH** encountered at the Belle Vue auction centre in early 1997

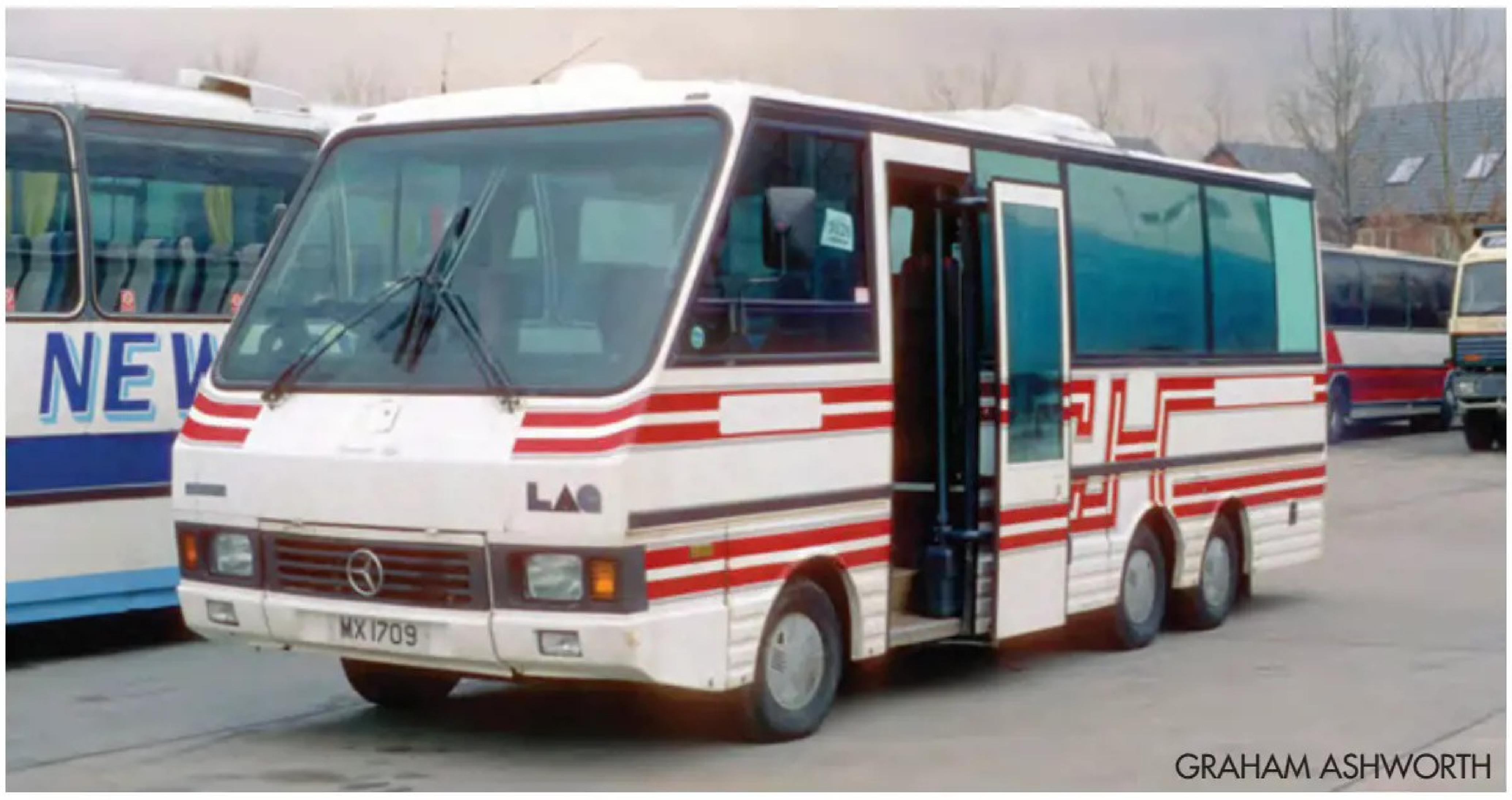
Belgian manufacturer LAG came to the UK in 1983, selling the full-size Galaxy body through the Yeates dealership and the 16-seat Tristar three-axle integral executive minicoach, with Mercedes-Benz engine.

It sold two. One registered HYB 1D and later LSK 122 went to BCA Aviation in late 1983, while London band bus operator Starcruiser took C993 RPK, later MXI 709, two years later. Considered too expensive given its size, the Tristar was dropped after a failed attempt to relaunch it as a dual-door service bus.

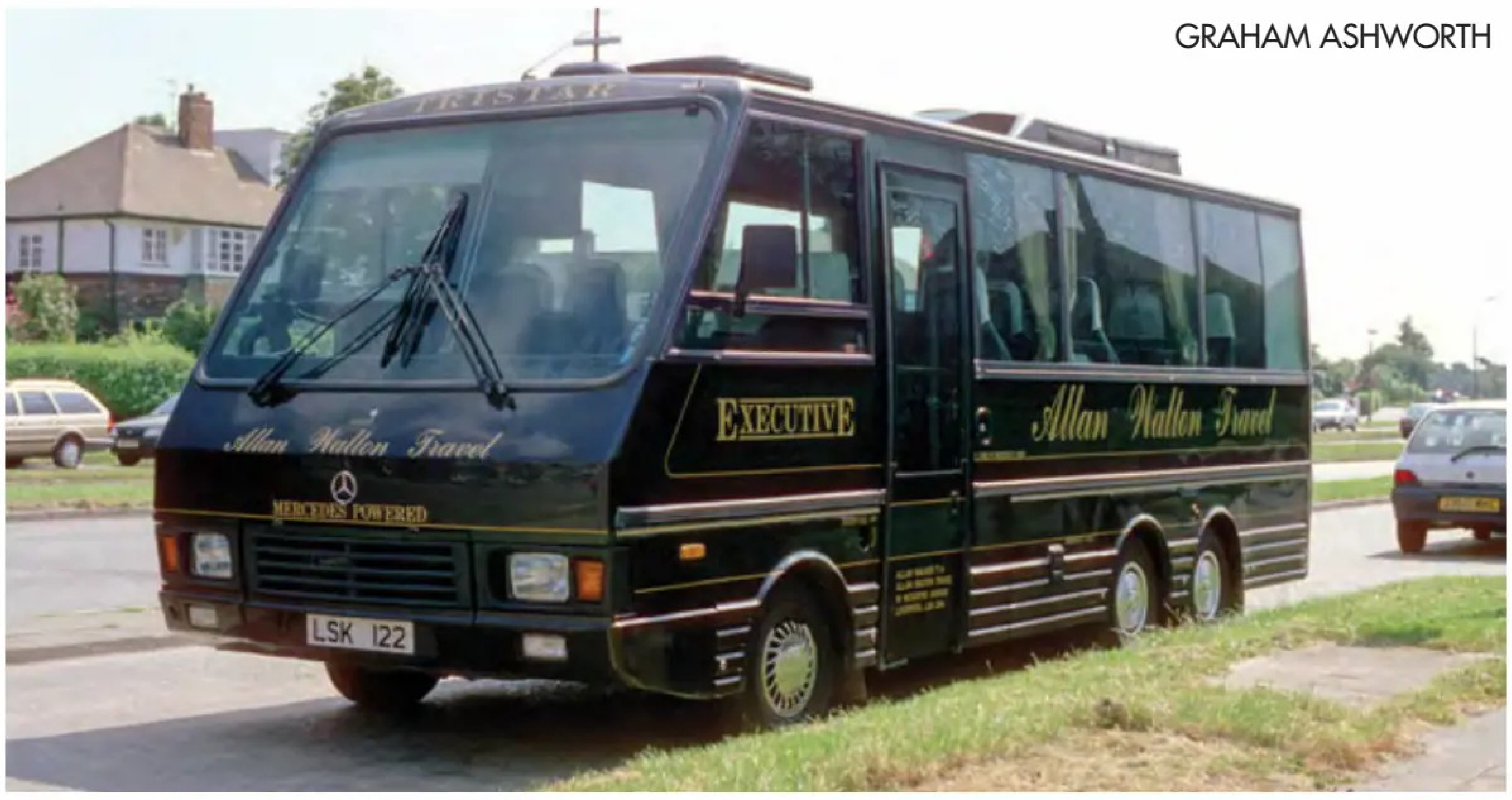
Both ended up with Iver Heath-based Studio Coaches which worked exclusively for the nearby Pinewood Studios. It acquired LSK 122 in 1993, MXI 709 in 1995. BCA had kept its Tristar for eight years after which it spent a short period with a London operator. Starcruiser sold MXI after only a few months; it then was with a London operator until Angela Coaches at Bursledon, Hampshire bought it in 1992, selling it earlier in 1995 to an operator in Cornwall.

Studio Coaches sent them to the Belle Vue auction in Manchester in February 1997. LSK 122 passed to a keen Merseyside operator of unusual coaches, Allan Walton Travel at Speke, but he sold it later the same year.

MXI 709 vanished without trace. It left Belle Vue still in Angela Coaches colours and was in the same state, unused, in a couple of north-west London locations over the next five years. When spotted in a Barnsley breaker's yard in 2006, it had been repainted gold, but like the vehicle itself, its final owner's dreams were about to be crushed. ■



GRAHAM ASHWORTH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0107. London. UK. Trams Light Rail. 1992. A first outing on the Docklands Light Railway, an automated system with guards, we traverse the original system
0169. Blackpool. UK. Trams 1990. Filmed by Margaret Bromley of Scarborough Ontario, John Bromley did the slides Margaret did the cine and later video exNTSC Pt1
0170. Blackpool. UK. Trams 1990. Filmed by Margaret Bromley of Scarborough Ontario, John Bromley did the slides Margaret did the cine and later video exNTSC Pt2
0586. London. UK. Buses. 1997. Featuring Oxford St, Stratford, Ilford. See all those wonderful liveries and logos, Nice close ups throughout, taken up to HD standard
0846. Greater Manchester Buses. 2000. This volume includes film taken by Dave Spencer in Wigan, Bury and Rochdale all brought up to HD standard.
5322. Dewsbury Bus Museum annual running day. UK. Buses. September. Age profiles with many decades covered, two cab rides plus running base near museum
5323. Rotherham. UK. Buses. Sept 2024. The main reason for this visit was to capture the first full delivery to serice Stagecoach electric buses, lots more besides
5324. Doncaster. UK. Buses. September 2024. A rather dismal early autumn afternoon with city centre buses on the main dual carriageway not so many electrics seen
5325. Boyle St 200 Years of Mcr Buses. The orange years. September 2024. There early to record buses arriving which stayed inside, a bit of a shame but great day
5326. Showbus. UK. Buses. September 2024. Quainton Midlad Railway Centre. The first of the resurrected Showbus, mud, wind, rain but it all came togethr in the end
5331. Midland Red 120. Bus running day October 2024. The celebrations of Midland Red at 120 years since formation, bus operations, bus building incl engines
5332. Ashton under Lyne. October 2024. Scenes at the bus station cum interchange on a pleasantly light cloud dry morning, all very friendly drivers, superb visit
5333. Bury. UK Buses. October 2024. Difficult lighting conditions as the heavy rain clouds gathered but with some sunshine, a great mix of buses includes Bee Network
5334. Merseyside. UK. Buses. STILL PHOTO FILM, images upgraded to HD. A thousand photos from 1980s on from the camera of your old mate Dave plus Stuart Garner
5335. Skipton Bus Running Day. October 2024. Another splendid day out in Yorkshire with a great fleet of interesting buses covering many decades at the bus station
5336 Merseyside UK Buses. STILL PHOTO FILM. Images upgraded to HD. A thousand photos taking us up to 1999 all from the camera of your old mate Dave Spencer
5337 Merseyside UK Buses. STILL PHOTO FILM. Images upgraded to HD. A thousand plus photos taking us up to date in 2024. All taken by your old mate Dave at PMP
5338. Wigan. UK. Buses Oct 2024. A perfect autumnal day, hazy sun and plenty of buses including one just arrived. All very friendly perhaps the best visit to Wigan yet!
5339. Bolton. UK. Buses. October 2024. Well into the all yellow era save the odd bus with a sticker, plenrty of orange trainers around, amazing quantity of buses there
5341, Luton. UK. Buses. October 2024. A routine update which produced new tri axles with Uni Bus and plenty more besides and it was just so friendly, nice one Luton
5342, Bedford. UK. Buses. October 2024. Although the bus quantity had fallen yet again it was really very friendly with no exceptions and still plenty of deckers about.
5347. St Helens Autumn Bus Running Day. October 2024 Great to see the St Helens RT returned to the museum ex Lathalmond where it languished for years
5348. Manchester. UK. Buses. October 2024. A last chance to witness the pre Bee network Metrobus changes which will come in force early in January 2025
5349. Cambridge. UK. Buses. October 2024. Not a bad visit, lots of electric buses but a taste of old time independents, four plus Stagecoach with a Cambus heritage!
5353. NWVRT. Kirkby. UK. Buses. The November nocturnal bus running day sposored by PMP, a great show which attracts youngsters and families, great turnout
5354. Manchester Transport Museum. UK. Buses. November 2024. Where would we be in Manchester without a drop or two of rain, interesting vehicles and good day
5355. Reports from the past. London UK The pre WWII era as seen with buses and street scenes through the lens of news report, cinema features and period films
5356. Reports from the past. London UK The WWII era as seen with buses and street scenes through the lens of news report, cinema features and period films
5357. Reports from the past London UK The post war era from 1940s right up to the heyday of the RT and introduction of RMs featuring mostly news clips

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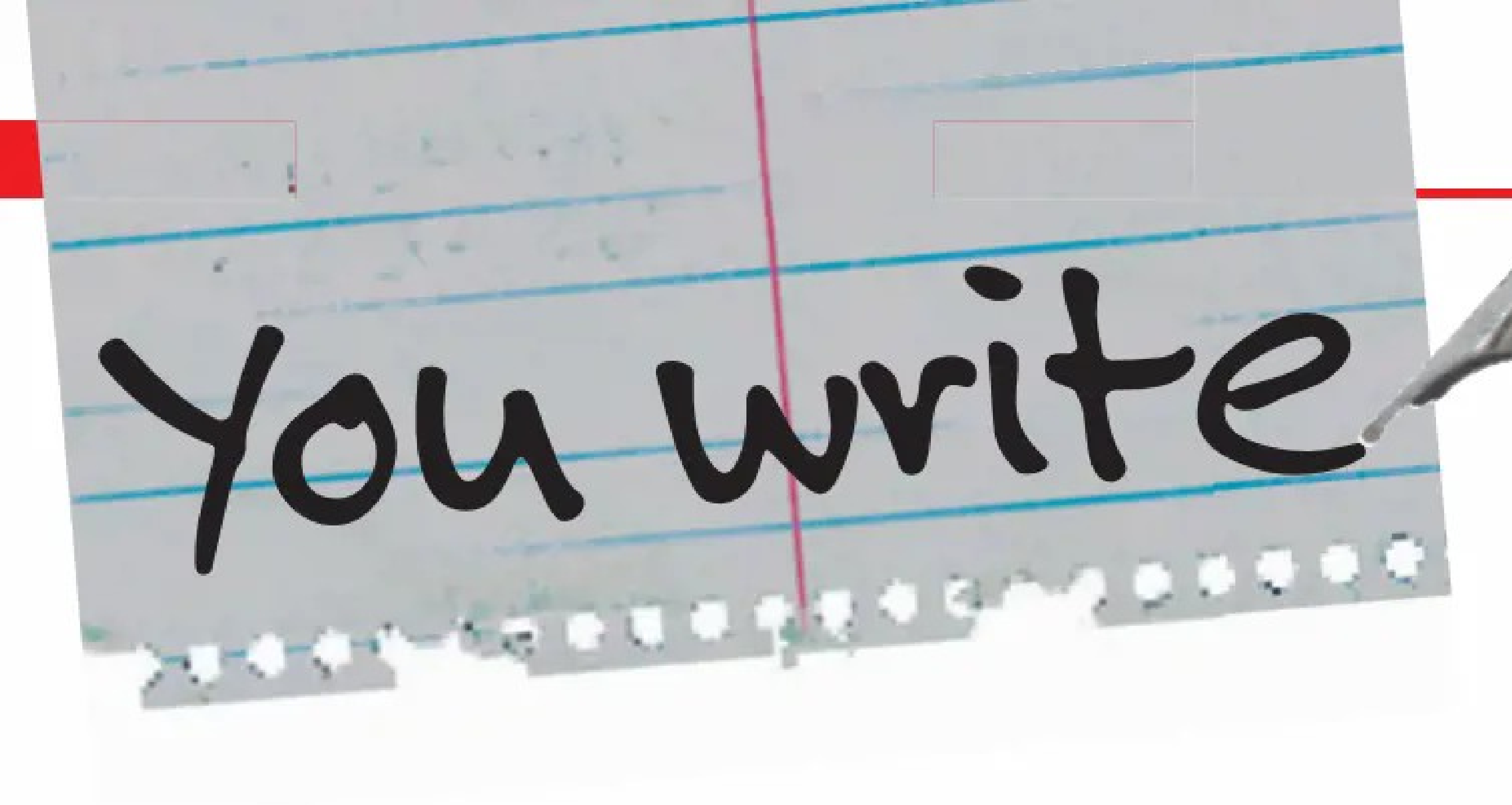

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Concerns for franchised Nottingham

An article, a letter and a news story caught my attention in the December 2024 edition of *Buses* and, in my mind, are linked:

The article 'Cardiff Bus after Electrification' says: "Exposing [Cardiff and Newport] to competitive franchise tenders – from international companies experienced in bidding for franchises – would be likely to diminish the size of both Welsh municipals."

I rather like the phrase 'Big Bus Bandits' in Andrew Heenan's letter headed 'Franchising vs decline'. As a 'fellow 'bus user' I agree with him wholeheartedly when he writes: "Privatisation has seen a spiral of decline which shows no sign of waning, in the endless focus on profit, to the almost complete detriment of service."

Living in the greater Nottingham conurbation, I fear for not only the future of municipally owned Nottingham City Transport and Wellglade-owned Trentbarton Buses as well, but CT4N, the local voluntary in origin bus operator, and Nottinghamshire County Council's County Bus. Between them, given limited resources, they provide the likes of me with excellent bus services.

Soon, all these operators will be at the mercy of the new East Midlands (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) Combined Authority (EMCA), which has just been awarded £40m to spend on buses. It will be interesting to see what Mayor Claire Ward does with the money. I just hope she decides that franchising/outsourcing is not a good option, when there are excellent local/regional bus operators in place.

My advice to her is to build on what there is by introducing evening and Sunday buses on existing routes which operate Monday-Saturday daytime only. Call it 'partnership working' if you like, then Andrew's 'Big Bus Bandits' can be kept under control.

Finally, the news story about the Dutch bus manufacturer Ebusco, who are planning to become an Original Equipment Design (OED) business outsourcing/franchising others to build buses for them. This is what happens with so many products, so why not buses? In the absence of import tariffs, more robots and lower wages, I don't know how we can help the UK (and EU) bus industry in the absence of being willing to pay more for new buses.

Experience suggests, like with the railways, franchising will end up costing taxpayers a great deal of money before the next big bus idea emerges!

Robert Howard, Beeston

Cross-subsidy

As a bus user, I do not share Andrew Heenan's views on cross-subsidy (*You Write*, *December*) and I doubt whether it is happening with franchising in Greater Manchester.

It was pointed out at a Bee Network committee meeting earlier this year, to councilors who were puzzled as to why the new night bus services needed subsidy, that franchising has not released large sums of money. As pointed out in the same issue (page eight) in the item on franchising proposals for South Yorkshire, operators in that area have struggled to make any profit and this problem will be inherited by the franchised network, which will require external public funding.

So, not much scope for cross-subsidy there.

Roger N. Holden, Stockport

Vehicles from Pelucar

Further to Graham Ashworth's article Under the Hammer in *Buses* September issue, an article appeared in Commercial Motor on May 14, 1992, regarding that year's German International Commercial Vehicle show.

It included some background as to the source of such vehicles, Pelucar of East Germany. The article does identify the Voll Bus as being based on Fiat Ducato front wheel drive components and Alko tandem-axle frame and that it was already in service with Swiss and German operators.

Other than this, I too have been unable to trace any other reference to the company or vehicles, so far.

David Peacock, Driffield

The relevant section of the article reads: "Another association with Czech practice was the presentation of a range of light CVs by Pelucar of East Germany, which will also introduce the Volldesigned citybus into its production programme. The Voll bus — already in service with a number of Swiss and German operators — is based on Fiat Ducato front-wheel-drive components combined with a low Alko tandem-axle frame."

Woeful in Wakefield

There now seems a considerable amount of money going to be put into bus services which if done correctly will help bus operators in the areas concerned, but as someone who lives in Arriva Yorkshire land I'm not too optimistic about any improvements in the services in the area, especially in Wakefield where I live.

I'm now retired but used Arriva for journeys to and from work in Leeds, but services to from Ossett to Leeds have been withdrawn and replaced by a Monday to Friday daytime service operated by Star Coaches. Good on them for filling part of the gap.

Various services have been axed, too many to mention over the last few years.

We now have a situation in Wakefield where the Arriva depot has been closed due to building safety issues and the Wakefield fleet is distributed overnight at the bus station, Dewsbury depot and also Castleford depot. The registered office has been transferred to Newcastle – why not Dewsbury or Castleford?

Arriva Yorkshire has a shortage of 80 drivers, and I ask why? Covid did not help, I appreciate that it left problems, but you can't blame it for ever.

Recently, the area where I live had four consecutive buses between 09:00 and 12:00 cancelled. Arriva Yorkshire is saying that there will be more service cuts in February. I have to wonder what will be left! Come back National Bus Company, all is forgiven.

Dave Parkin, Wakefield

Day tickets beat new single fares

With the single fare now increasing from £2 to £3, here in Colchester it will be cheaper to buy an inter borough day ticket at £5.20 (which can be used on all buses) than it would be to buy two singles £6.00.

The First Essex day ticket is £5.00, but they only run one bus an hour to my home area during the daytime.

Johan Mahoney-Berg, Colchester

Modern distribution

I've enjoyed Alan Millar's series of articles summarising the "75 years of *Buses*", having been a bus enthusiast for many of those years.

In the final instalment, he refers to the failure of the British Coachways consortium to unseat National Express in 1980-2. To his list of reasons for that failure, I'd add the lack of a national distribution network for ticket sales.

In those days, most express coach service tickets were bought over the counter of an enquiry office or through travel agents. NBC of course had a national network of enquiry offices in bus stations and depots across England & Wales, in the vast majority of towns and cities, whereas the British Coachways consortium members had a far more restricted presence on the high street.

Today, the growth of Flixbus shows how a modern distribution channel – the internet – makes it much easier to challenge a strong incumbent operator.

Richard Delahoy, Southend-on-Sea

Concessions vs cash

Regarding James Day's 'Cost versus benefit' (*Buses* November), he argues that 'some users of the pass state their willingness to pay a little towards their fare'.

This may be true, although I have not seen any surveys which indicate this. I have heard suggested a £1 flat fare. The problem would be a significant increase in boarding time, while concessionary pass holders search their pockets or bags for, say, a £1 coin, or offer a £10 note which would require change.

Bus operators are not keen on dealing with cash anyway and it adds significantly to costs. In somewhere like London, where drivers do not accept cash, it would involve the establishment of cash counting procedures and the reconciliation of tickets sold to cash receipts across the whole TfL network. I wonder if there would really be a net gain to anyone except those who got the jobs counting cash.

I accept there is a real discussion that needs to take place about reimbursement rates.

My local First route F1 (a short suburban route) avoids some of the cost by essentially not operating at peak times, thus avoiding an addition to PVR, thus the last journey from Sainsburys is at 15:45 (Monday – Friday). Although, we did manage to find a later bus that finished its college journeys at 17:30 and was able to do a 17:45 rounder on the F1 'on school days only'.

Peter Davies, Fareham

Action shots

Tony Wilson's letter (*Buses* December) addressed an issue that bus photographers are facing with increasing annoyance – blinds displaying black bars, showing less and less as the shutter speed increases.

LED lights and some other electronic blinds too have a cycle and refresh rate which can clash with the shutter speed of the camera, such that the "blind" pulses as its refresh cycle does not complete in the time it takes the shutter to release. This means you need a slower shutter speed.

It seems not all digital displays do this, which will of course be understood by regular photographers. Part of the solution is to photograph stationary buses or use shutter speeds of 1/125 or 1/160 sec to counter the problem, but there are two other options which can be beneficial if the photographer needs the bus to be moving and they feel adventurous.

One is to try a more frontal aspect. If the bus is travelling towards the camera at even a normal driving speed, the depth of field of the photograph is not important. The movement of the bus will be frozen – even at very slow shutter speeds. As long as you don't take too many rapid shots, the bus won't move out of focus range and will stay sharp.

However, if you are going for a side or three quarter shot with the bus moving, the problem of lateral (motion) blur and the blind being correctly captured would seem to be at odds – but not necessarily. There is a technique called "panning". Its something which needs practice, but is great in low light, for night shots etc and adds another skill to your armoury.

As the bus is coming into shot, have the camera ready to shoot, then fix and focus on one point of the bus. Have your elbows tucked in for rigidity and follow the point of focus by rotating the shoulders and upper body, smoothly as you take your shot. Take a rapid series of photos and you'll find that a good number will be sharp. For good measure, you might get some background blur which will enhance the picture. This is how a pro shoots birds in flight or racing cars at speed.

Try it, you might be pleasantly surprised!

Simon J. Clark, London

More doors?

Over the years on my holidays abroad, I've noticed that just about wherever I travel, the buses in service seem to have two, or even three entrances. Yet here in the UK, outside London and a few sparse exceptions, passengers are stuck crowding through a single entrance.

For the life of me I cannot understand why so few bus operators have tried using two entrances, devoting one to people boarding the bus and another to people alighting. On some high capacity double-deckers, you can have enormous volumes of people travelling in different directions which have a clear effect on stop dwell time. I imagine outside observers would find a bus with nearly 100 seats but only one entrance to be absolutely ridiculous.

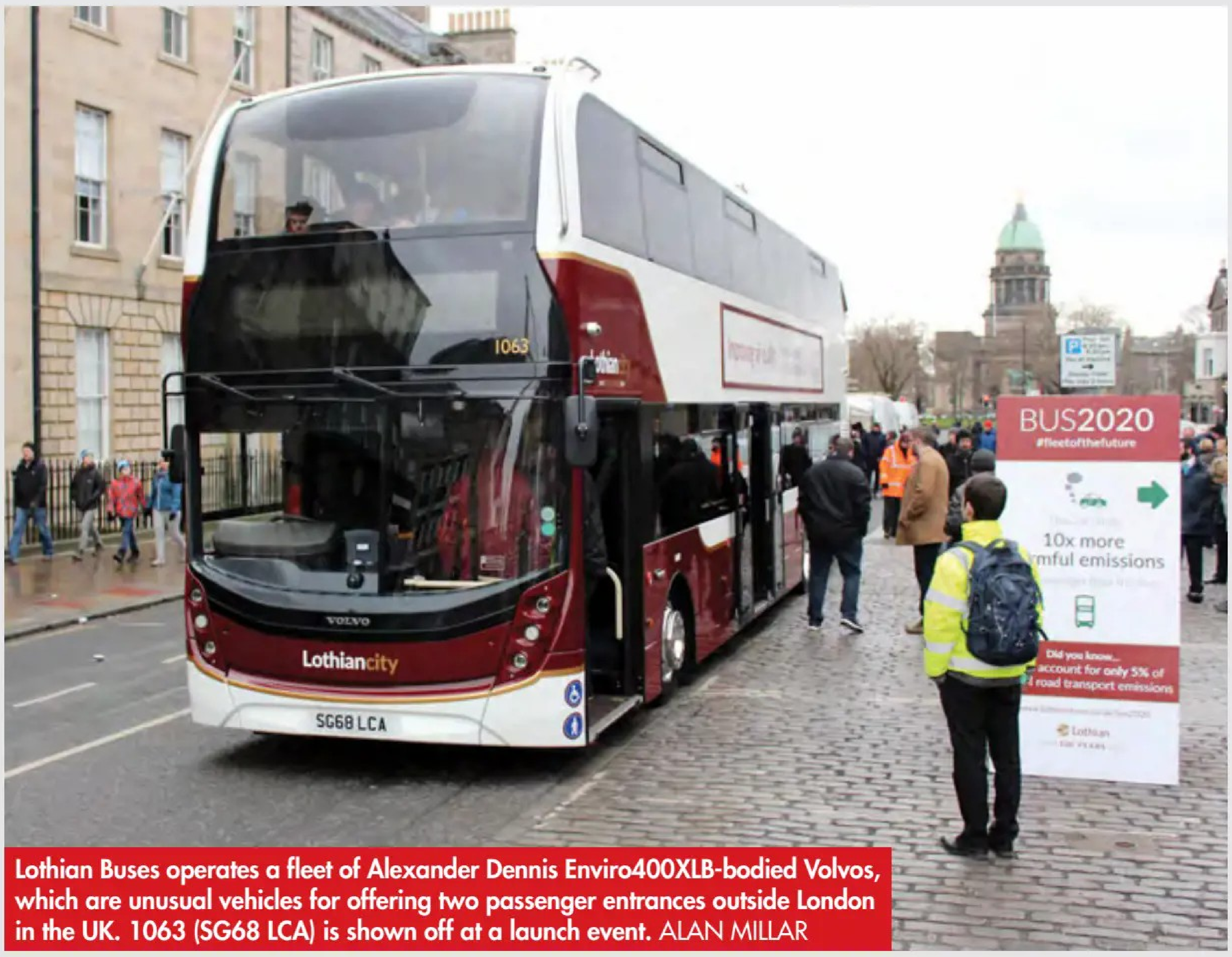
Much is made by operators of the impact of traffic congestion on their services, but I'm sure there are steps they can take to improve the reliability of their own routes, instead of simply blaming the traffic, deciding there's nothing to be done and washing their hands of all responsibility for poor punctuality. I understand the argument that traffic makes services more expensive to run, but I've never really agreed with the sentiment that it makes buses less attractive. Surely, if you're going to be stuck in traffic either way, you'd rather be able to read or watch something on a bus, instead of controlling your own stop-start car?

Perhaps it's a fear of fare dodgers, the fact bus doors are a pain to maintain, or an inability or unwillingness to implement some of the high-tech ticketing systems seen elsewhere. With all the fancy technology available today, I find it hard to believe that someone hasn't found a way of making a two-door bus work with a smart ticketing system. But then, many operators seem unable to do something as simple as providing a comprehensible online information resource on their services and fares.

I had thought we might see more two-door vehicles in Manchester once the Bee Network went live, since it is 'London-style', but that doesn't appear to be the case.

More operators seem willing to go cashless, or worse, stop giving change for cash fares, as a method of speeding up dwell times.

Harry Bradford, Cambridge



Lothian Buses operates a fleet of Alexander Dennis Enviro400XLB-bodied Volvos, which are unusual vehicles for offering two passenger entrances outside London in the UK. 1063 (SG68 LCA) is shown off at a launch event. ALAN MILLAR

Long lost connections

[Letter originally sent to *Southampton Daily Echo*] May I comment further on the 300,000 Southampton Citizens who are without a bus service between Whiteley and Southampton inclusive, along with the conurbations in between.

It may seem 'unbelievable', but it is a fact. Although you can count the miles between them on your fingers, there is no public transport connection, neither bus or train to catch, between the two major centres of Southampton and Whiteley, just a few miles apart. This is affecting in the region of 300,000 people and is in stark contradiction of the Green Agenda, to which Councils are supposed to be signed up to. What a joke!

Solent City between Portsmouth and Southampton has been on the agenda of national government since the middle of the last century. That is why money was provided by the Government at that time, to construct the M3, M27 and electrification of the mainline; to put in place basic transport infrastructure for the plan.

Sadly, with local connections, planners are a way behind the times but, with Government funding now on the table, there is no reason why this situation cannot change. Just why this bus connection has been ignored for so long is a mystery, but this cannot be allowed to be ignored any longer. To do so would be grossly irresponsible.

In this regard, it would seem appropriate if Bluestar Bus route 14, was extended from the present terminus in Grange Park, a residential district, to Whiteley and Segensworth. If routed through the corridor

COBHAM BUS MUSEUM
WEYBRIDGE STATION
93
AHC 411

MICHAEL DRYHURST

Manual Regal III

As mentioned recently in Fleet News, Troopers Lodge, Bourton-on-the-Hill, Glos., has purchased a 1950 AEC Regal III. However, this is a model 6821A, indicating a synchromesh gearbox linked to a 7.7-litre engine.

New to Eastbourne Corporation as its no.11, the vehicle has an East Lancs DP30R body. Although in the Sussex fleet for many years, it saw only sporadic use, mostly on private hire work. It wasn't sold until well into the 21st century.

My photo sees it sometime in the 1980s, on the occasion of a London Bus Preservation Group Cobham Bus Museum open day, in the Eastbourne post-1962 dreary livery. Once into preservation, it regained its original colours of navy blue, rich yellow with white roof.

Michael Dryhurst, Arkansas, USA

of urban conurbations in between, it would form the lifeblood of these communities and would connect all ten of the major population hubs of; Bittern, West End, The Superstores, Grange Park [for Hedge End Station], Hedge End Centre [restoring the missing link from Grange Park], Botley, Curbridge, Whiteley and Segensworth. This urban corridor of population centres, would all be connected up for the very first time, bringing a long overdue boost to the economy of the area.

In Serving all ten of the high population centres along this urban corridor, the route has an excellent prospect to become a very viable investment, after an initial publicity launch and seasonal time to become established.

In addition, some of the Government money now available should also be used to provide more bus shelters. These are essential if motorists are to leave the car at home. Nobody wants to get soaking wet waiting for a bus.

It may be 30 years late, but a bus shelter is urgently needed in Tollbar Way, at the stop fronting Curry's store. This is a much used bus stop serving the major superstores and is long overdue, 30 years in-fact, for a bus shelter.

H. R. Harwood, Southampton

Graduate managers and single fares

In the July issue of Buses, Rob Bucher mentions that some operators regard drivers as disposable assets akin to mechanical parts, and that morale is low. Rob suggests that a contributory cause is graduate managers who have no experience of driving a bus in service.

Maybe there is a wider definition of this? Many younger people in the bus industry, whether in management, driving or maintenance positions, have little experience of using buses in their own life, beyond education-related transport. They may not appreciate that buses can serve the wider community, seeing them only for those with minimal means, or aspects like park-&-ride. The effect of delays and lost mileage may not be fully realised, as they have rarely waited at a bus stop themselves.

Regarding the single fare cap, Julian Peddle suggests it benefits the wrong people, and there may be some truth in this. People on a distant leisure journey greet it with appreciative surprise, but lowly-paid workers, travelling locally each day, may see few real savings.

By hypothetical comparison, what if the government helped the hospitality sector by subsidising prices at participating venues? A "£2/3 a pint" offer may benefit those making an occasional venture into town for a birthday, sports fixture or live show, but would it encourage an increase in the mid-week evening trade? People go somewhere for a purpose, and pay whatever the prices are. In holiday areas, the visitors are there anyway, and pay the £2/3 bus fare, but equally when it was much more, they paid that as well.

There are other fare offers whose benefits are debatable. Up to three 'Kids Go Free' in school holidays if accompanied by an adult, but a recurring side effect is that adults do not offer to pay for children at any time. When the driver queries this, there is conflict and delay. A young person's equivalent of the £2 adult fare, applicable always, would be more suitable.

Regarding the move towards government control of public transport, this has been influenced by poor reliability under the deregulated model. I am concerned though, that some problems are not being spotted, and fall into the ether between political hype and local reality.

Depot run-out can be problematic, with maintenance staff who once did preparatory tasks now less likely to be employed. And drivers may only be paid a few minutes to locate their vehicle, defect check it, have it signed-off as 'fit for service', and move other vehicles that may be blocking it in, before joining a queue for the coolant. The latter task will disappear with electric buses, but the others will not.

In reality, the driver has to commence work much earlier, in his/her own time, to complete these tasks. And during winter, this can take even longer, as the bus may be iced-up in an outside compound. The batteries may struggle, and beyond this, luxuries like heated mirrors and windscreens, if fitted at all, are less reliable once the vehicle is beyond its earliest years.

If a defect is found, there can be considerable delays and no contingencies, resulting in lost mileage. Early journeys carrying workers and scholars may not operate. And throughout the day as a whole, will resources be available to replace buses and drivers that are absent? These were reduced under the privatisation process, then often dispensed with altogether by the major groups.

The higher echelons may think these are "the depot's problems", but those struggling locally seek more assistance from above. I am not pointing the blame at anyone specifically, but raising an issue that is overlooked.

I ask please, will the government, local authorities and organisations like the Confederation of Passenger Transport 'lift the lid' and look inside to discover such shortcomings? If not, electric buses may be a big switch-off as far as passengers and drivers are concerned.

If the industry is to prosper, with or without capped single fares, it will be helpful if a good number of those employed, at whatever level or position, have a personal belief in public transport. Whether they are graduates or not is of less consequence. A footballer will not score if he doesn't want to be on the pitch, a singer will not perform if they don't want to do the show. And the talent is in their performance, rather than their qualifications.

It is becoming established that drivers carry much responsibility for the success of the industry, as relatively few people are employed in it otherwise. A motivated driver, interested in the job, will deliver a good service and be disappointed with delays and service failures. Likewise, a graduate manager, interested in the job, may have the ideas and perception to create a prospering network, and keep the passengers and employees aboard. I think this applies whether under the deregulated model or government control.

Tony Walshaw, Middlesbrough

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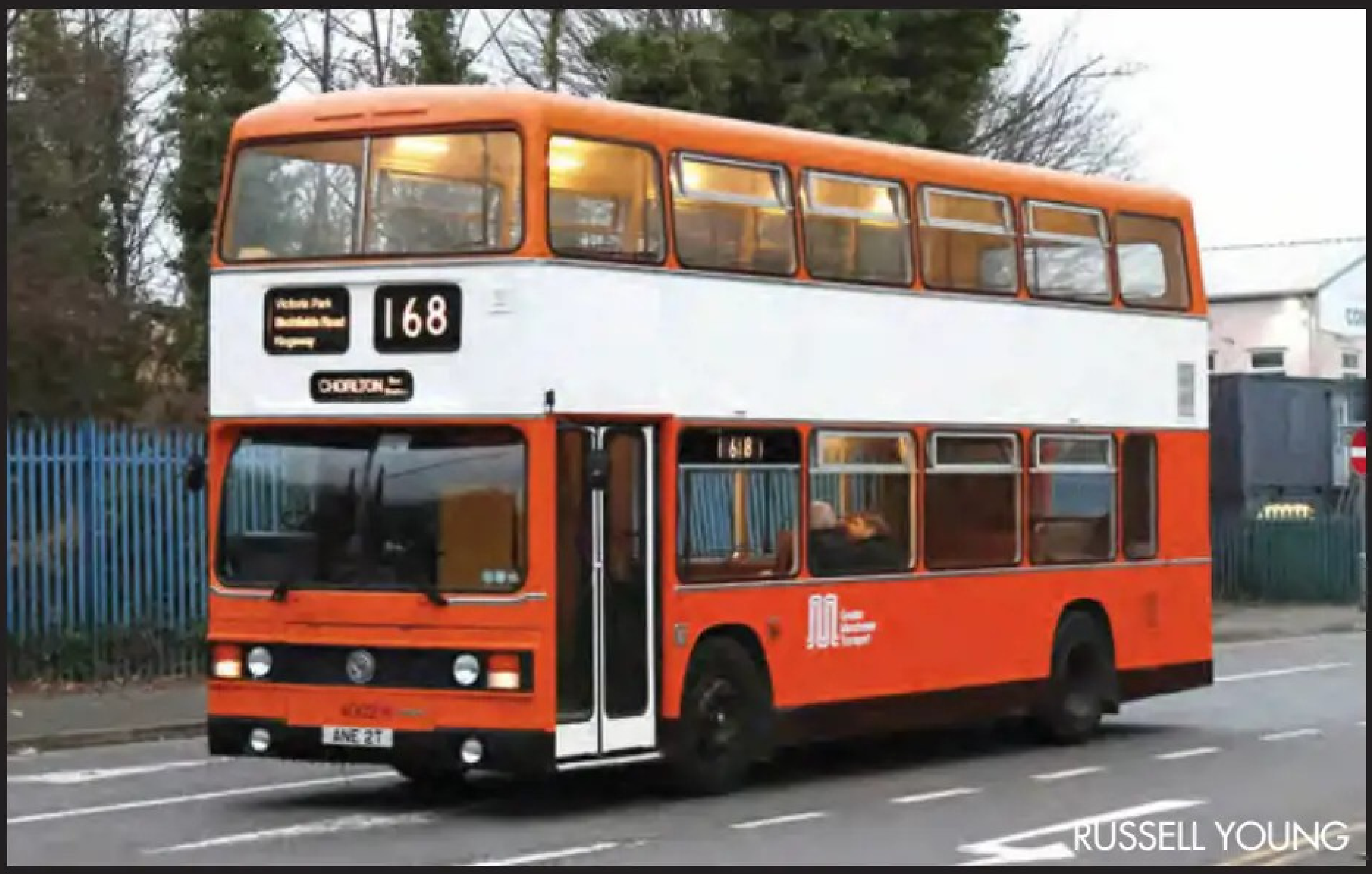
065/25

NEW ROUTE ENHANCES KIRKBY NOCTURNAL RUNNING DAY

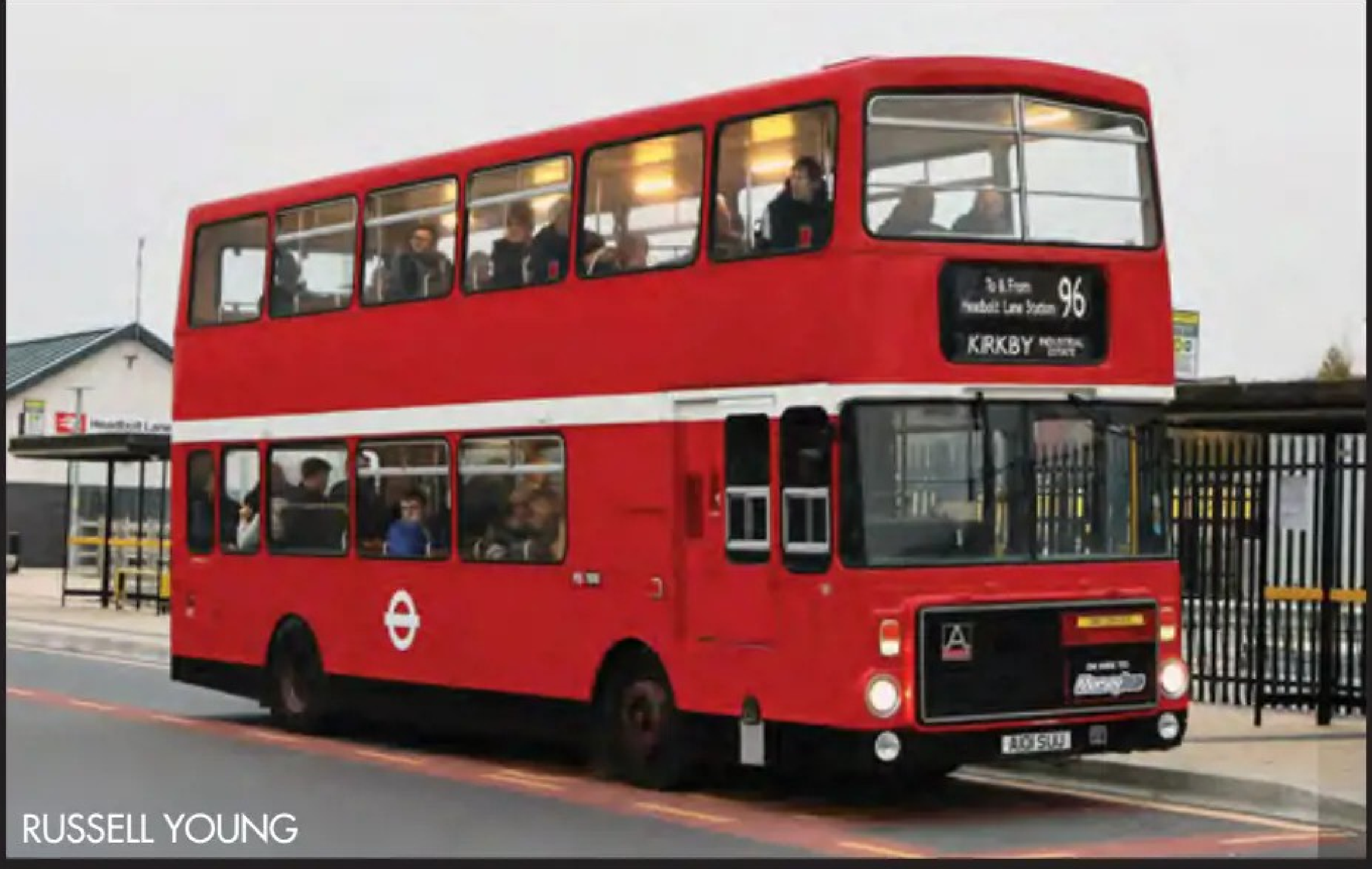
A second route was introduced at the North West Vehicle Restoration Trust's nocturnal running day at Kirkby on November 9.

The new route 96 taking around 10min to link the NWVRT facility at Kirkby with the recently opened Merseyrail station at Headbolt Lane proved so popular that its frequency was increased from half-hourly to every 10 to 15min. Visitors were encouraged to use the station car park and catch a bus. This complemented the longer established half-hourly route 96 from Prescot station. Services began at 14:00, with the last journeys departing from Kirkby at around 19:00.

In operation for the first time in ten years was Greater Manchester Transport 4002 (ANE 2T) of 1979, one of 15 Park Royal-bodied Leyland Titan TN15s delivered out of an intended initial order for 190. The Selnec Preservation Society has lent it to the NWVRT for 12 months for use it its events during 2025.



RUSSELL YOUNG



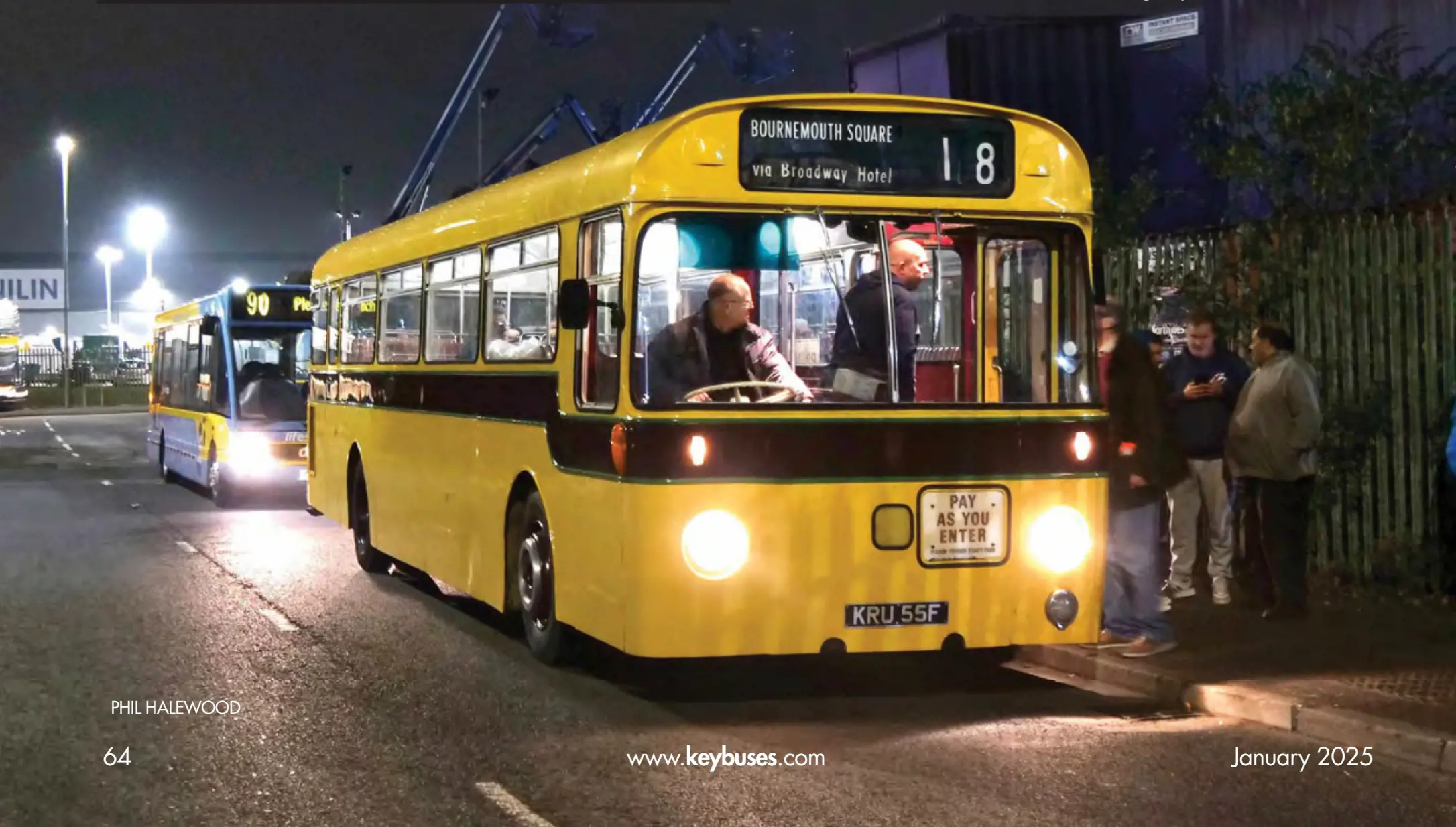
RUSSELL YOUNG

Other notable participants included London Buses V1 (A101 SUU), an Alexander RV-bodied Volvo Ailsa new in 1984 as part of the four-way evaluation of 12 double-deckers in the capital. It was fitted with a full set of destination blinds for the day and an 'On hire to Merseybus' board in a nod to an episode from its past. It was in the London Northern fleet when Merseybus owner MTL acquired that company in October 1994. MTL transferred it to Liverpool in November 1994 and numbered it 0083.

Making its rally debut was former Blackpool Transport 288 (YJ07 EJD), a 33-seat Optare Solo M950 new in April 2007 and restored to Lifestyle Line service 16 livery. It completed trips on both connecting services.

Among the resident vehicles in action — there were around 16 visiting ones — was Ribble 1523 (KCK 869), a 1958 Leyland Titan PD3/4 with Burlingham body, while one of the most tuneful visitors was Bournemouth Corporation 55 (KRU 55F), a Willowbrook-bodied Daimler Roadliner powered by a Perkins V8 engine that replaced its original Cummins V6.

A surprise visitor was London Transport RT3314 (LYR 533), a 1951 Park Royal-bodied AEC Regent III 3RT owned by a Keighley company that hires classic vehicles for film work. It happened to be in the area in the week before the running day.



PHIL HALEWOOD

PHIL HALEWOOD

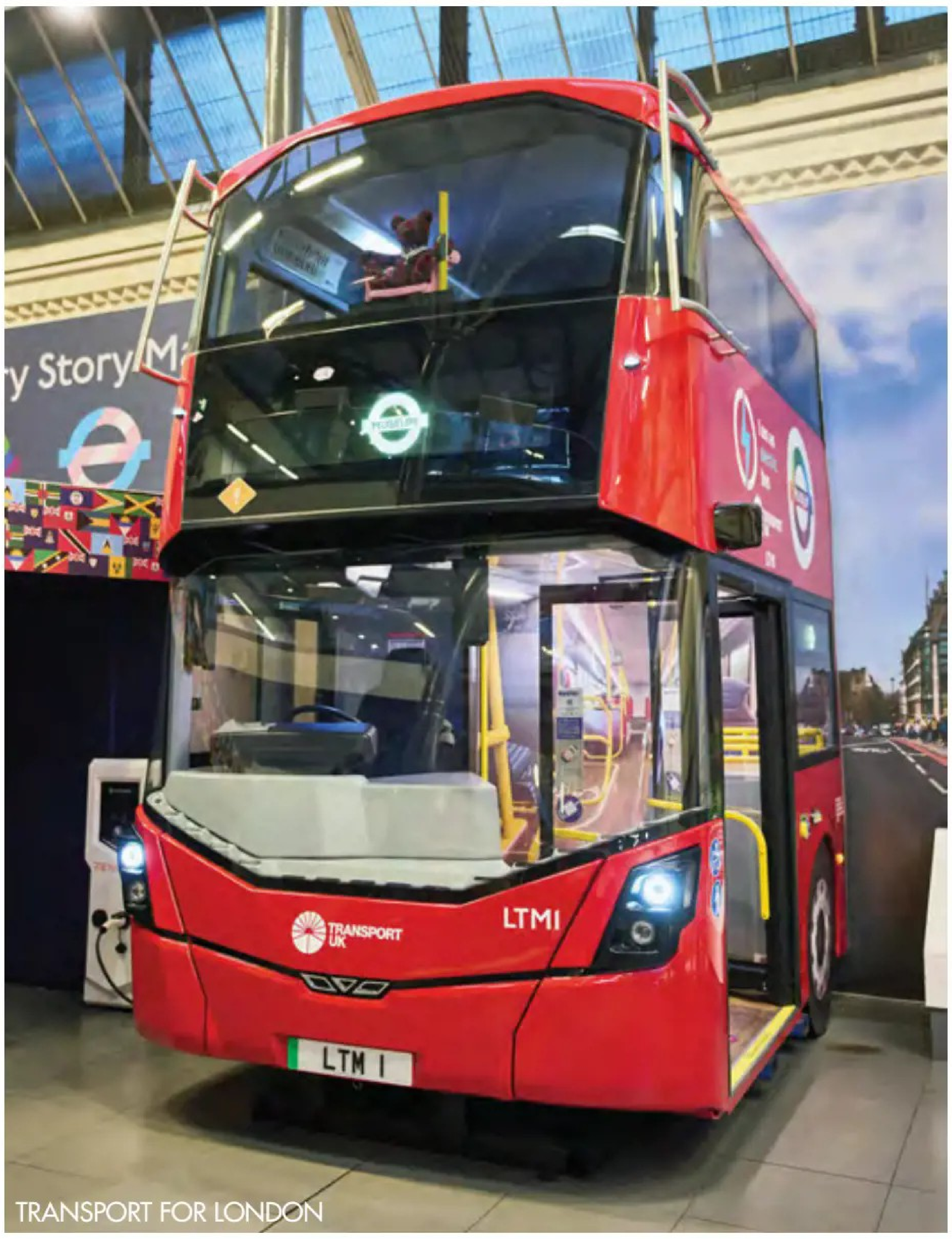
RUSSELL YOUNG

PHIL HALEWOOD

THE LT MUSEUM GOES ELECTRIC

Transport UK London has provided the London Transport Museum with a new interactive vehicle display incorporating the front section of a zero-emission Wright StreetDeck Electroliner.

Wrightbus supplied the body and chassis parts for the exhibit which was assembled by RGI Bus & Coach Refurbishment, now part of the Wrightbus business. It is complemented by a Zenobe electric charger and is equipped with Hanover Displays digital destination "blind", Navaho next-stop display, Journeo driver camera monitoring, Lazzerini seats and AG Marketing internal displays.


TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

RALLY CALENDAR UPDATE

DECEMBER

15, 22 LONG HANBOROUGH Oxford Bus Museum Santa visit and free vintage bus rides 12:15, 14:15.

21/22 LOWESTOFT Ride the Lights, East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville 15:00-19:00.

25 LEEDS Black Prince Buses free service.

27 LLANDUDNO Toy & Train Fair, Venue Cymru, LL30 1BB.

JANUARY

1 WINCHESTER Friends of King Alfred Mini Running Day, 09:00-16:00, with around six King Alfred vehicles operating free bus services based on Broadway.

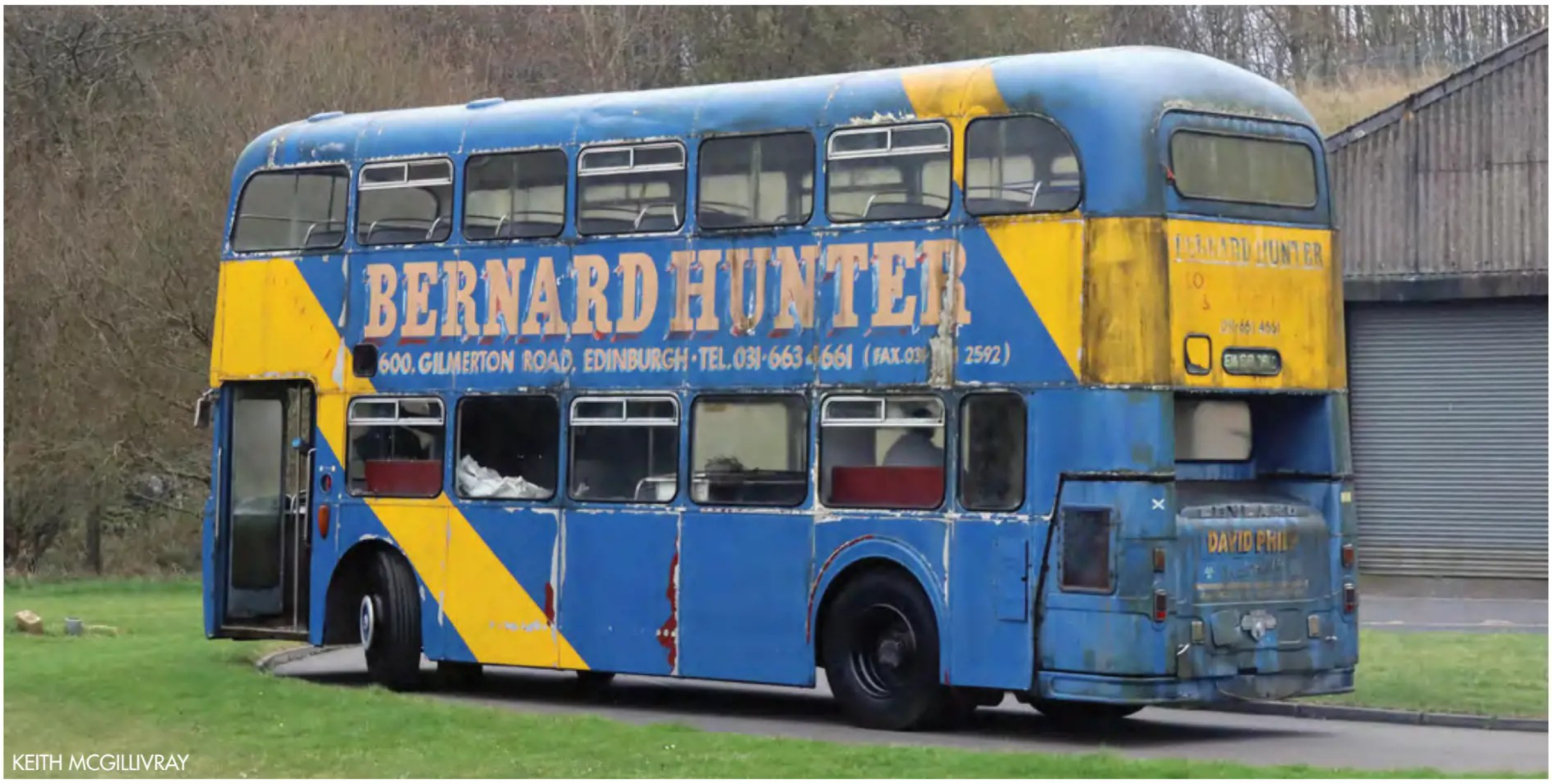
1 WREXHAM/CHESTER Charity Bus Running Day.

1 LOWESTOFT Open Day, East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville 12:00-16:30.

1 LONG HANBOROUGH Oxford Bus Museum running event.

2025/26 MUSEUM & RALLY GUIDE

Our comprehensive guide to transport museums and bus events from March 2025 to spring 2026 will be published with April *Buses*. If you are organising rallies, running days, fairs, swapmeets and similar events, to be sure of it being included in our free listings, please send the details of where and when to **alan.millar@keypublishing.com** to arrive no later than **Monday February 3.**



KEITH MCGILLIVRAY

EARLY EDINBURGH PDR1/1 ATLANTEAN SAVED IN BLUE

One of Edinburgh Corporation's first Leyland Atlanteans has been donated for preservation at the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum where it will retain the livery of the crane hire and metal recycling business that has owned it for 34 of its 58 years.

Alexander-bodied 806 (EWS 806D), new in October 1966, was among an initial order for 25 PDR1/1 Atlanteans placed following trials of Atlantean, Daimler Fleetline and AEC Renown demonstrators early the previous year. So close was the relative performance of the two rear-engined contenders that the corporation intended to split its 1966 intake equally between the Atlantean and Fleetline. It took a cautious approach instead, buying 25 front-engined Leyland Titan PD3A/2s instead of the Fleetlines, vehicles considered obsolete when they were withdrawn in 1978/79.

In common with all but the first two of the initial order, 806 has short side windows on both decks. The first two and all the subsequent deliveries of 563 Alexander-bodied Atlanteans to Edinburgh and Lothian Region had double-length panoramic side windows.

BERNARD HUNTER
EWS 806D

KEITH MCGILLIVRAY

ALAN MILLAR

Lothian retained 806 for use as a mobile travel shop, painted in a version of its black and white coach livery. It was sold in 1990 to Bernard Hunter, a long-established Edinburgh business still active in metal recycling and mobile crane hire that until the mid-1970s purchased many of the city's buses for scrapping. Repainted blue and yellow, it was taken to events in the 1990s to publicise the Hunter business.

Jim Rafferty, chairman of Bernard Hunter, has gifted the bus to Jamie Baxter of engineering support at Lothian, on the understanding that it will be restored in the company's colours. Although it was towed from Edinburgh to the museum at Lathalmond in west Fife, it is capable of being driven under its own power. Lengthy open storage has taken its toll on the bodywork and electrics, and it is to undergo a major restoration.

Edinburgh's first Atlantean, panoramic-windowed 801 (ESC 801C), is resident at Lathalmond, fully restored to madder and white fleet livery. So was another of the 23 with short windows, 812 (EWS 812D), before its then owner emigrated with it to Australia in 2014. It was sold in 2023 and converted into a mobile home, still in Edinburgh livery with authentic destination blinds and original seats. It is its new owner's full-time home and in April 2024 was reported to be resident on the Whitsundays Islands off the Queensland coast.

LONDON-STYLE RT RETURNS TO ST HELENS

St Helens Corporation D67 (BDJ 67), one of the two survivors of 40 London Transport-specification AEC Regent III 3RTs with Park Royal bodies new to the municipality in 1950-52, has returned to the North West Museum of Road Transport after 17 years' exile in Scotland.

The St Helens general manager at the time, Ronald Edgley Cox, was a former London Transport engineer who recognised that the 14ft 3½in overall height of the RT provided sufficient clearance under low railway bridges to avoid needing to purchase more lowbridge double-deckers with a side sunken gangway.

D67 was one of an initial batch of 15 vehicles taken straight off the Park Royal production line and built to full London specification including destination display and seat fabric. They were delivered in 1950 and were followed by 25 more in 1951/52.

Their preselector gearboxes and air brakes made them more expensive to operate and St Helens reverted to manual gearboxes and vacuum brakes on subsequent orders for Leyland Titan PD2s with highbridge bodies built to the same height as the RTs. It sold the RTs in 1962 and D67 was one of 19 purchased by Kingston upon Hull Corporation to become is no.145. They remained in Hull until 1969-71, with the former D67 among 11 withdrawn in 1970.

NWMRT member Geoff Sandford acquired it in 1971, returning it to St Helens where the transport department serviced it and restored it to its original livery. He sold it later to RA Henton and on his death his family donated it to the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum at Lathalmond where it represented the large number of ex-London Transport RT, RTL and RTW double-deckers operated in Scotland from the mid-1950s to mid-1970s.

It performed regularly at open days and in April 2014 was driven to London for events to mark the 75th anniversary of the introduction of the first RT. It also paid a return visit to the St Helens museum in 2018 for an event commemorating 60 years since the town's last trolleybuses ran.

"After many years of stalwart service at Lathalmond, it's a pleasure to see the RT return to its true home in St Helens," says SVBM member Jim Methven.

Staffordshire independent Harper Bros of Heath Hayes purchased seven of the St Helens RTs and one of these, D7 (BDJ 807) from the later batch, is part of the Newman family's former Ensignbus heritage vehicle collection. It also is in full St Helens livery and retains platform doors fitted by Harper Bros.

ALAN MILLAR
317
KNOTTY ASH
BDJ 67
D67

ALAN MILLAR
309
ST. HELENS
D67
BDJ 67

IN FLEET NEWS THIS MONTH

- Blackburn Private Hire acquires a BYD integral electric from CT4N
- Brighton & Hove receives surplus Enviro400s from Sullivan Buses
- Falcon orders new generation Enviro200EVs for two Surrey routes
- NatEx West Midlands OmniCity double-deckers go to Connexions
- Bus Vannin places launch order for Cummins-powered StreetDeck

Adventure Travel DG
Acquired are Volvo B9R/Plaxton Elite YN10 FKM from Selwyns, Runcorn and tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante C55FLt BV67 JYA/E, JYA ex-Edwards, Llantrisant; the B11Rs were painted Megabus blue.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 TE1743 (SN09 CFY) remained with Metroline London in September and was not transferred here as planned.

Optare Metrocity V1080MC OM130/4 (YJ15 AOL/P) and Optare Solo M9250SR OS305 (YJ18 DHE) have passed to Sargeant, Kington, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 DE209 (YX58 DWF) Metrocity OM133/9 (YJ15 AOO/V) to A2B, Melbourn and Enviro200 DE210 (LK58 CSZ) to Ripley, Carlton (dealer). Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer training vehicle KU02 YTZ has gone to KHL Training, Derby

Aintree Coachline, Maghull
A new Mercedes-Benz Tourismo is on order.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC demonstrator YY73 TGZ, with Voith gearbox, was trialled in early December for comparison of this operator's examples with ZF transmission.

An Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC demonstrator was due here at the time of writing, fitted with Voith gearbox, to test against the ZF gearboxes of the 72/73-registered examples here.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban SK07 CFU, new to Lothian Buses, passed to Boyd, Bayherivagh, Barra in August. Optare Solo KX51 CTO has gone to PVS, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

Airparks
New at Luton Airport in August were Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B34F BU24 UDW/X, UFB/C/E.

Airport Bus Express, Stansted
Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 BV74 MZL was new in September.

Airsym, Colnbrook, Berks
H72F-seated Yutong U11DD electric double-decker EV74 SYM was new in September.

Al's, Birkenhead
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 SN12 AVU/W, SN13 CGY have been acquired ex-Sullivan Buses, South Mimms, via Ensign, Purfleet (dealer).

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban SN57 DCF has passed to Harpur, Derby.

Alpine, Llandudno CTG
Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther 56/8 (YN07 OOX, *W900 BUS, YN07 OOX, CSU 908, YN07 OOX*; YN07 OOY, *X900 BUS, YN07 OOY, CSU 909, YN07 OOY*) have been re-registered YNZ 3263 and TUI 7175 respectively.

AMK Chauffeur Drive, Passfield, Hants
Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53Ft BU74 YRV was new in September.

Anderson Travel, London FG
Further new VDL Futura coaches in November were C55Ft-seated FHD2-122 YG74 CVL/M and C57Ft-seated FHD2-129 YG74 CVN.

Andrew's, Tideswell, Derbyshire
Ford Transit M16 YP69XBR has been acquired, ex-Hartpury College, and re-registered J5 AOT.

Re-registered are tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite SA16 ZSS, ZUM (*KSK 980, LSK 877*) to J6, 7 AOT, Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther YN11 AXX, YX14 SDO to J11/4 AOT, Mercedes-Benz Tourismo N13 SST (*75 HC, N13 SST*) to J12 AOT, Setra S416GT-HD BU13 ZUA (*3 HDC, BU13 ZUA*) to J13 AOT, Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther YX17 OGV to J17 AOT, Mercedes-Benz Atego/Plaxton Cheetah XL FJ15 EJC to PUA 917, KY16 PWU (*DT02 BUS KY16 PWU*) to EAZ 2598, FJ17 PYA to NIB 6064, MAN 26.480/Beulas Jewel YK16 SOA to 345 BLA and Neoplan Tourliner OU14 SRZ to EUA 366.

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Première EAZ 2598 (*M172 VCT*), Volvo B10M/Van Hool Alizée EUA 366, PIL 6648 (*K803/4 HUM*) have been withdrawn and have reverted to their original registrations.

Phil Anslow & Sons, Varteg Hill
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YY74 GWV-X/Z have been re-registered PA72/1/3/4 BUS respectively.

Apcoa Parking
New at Luton Airport are B27F-seated Mercedes-Benz Citaro BV74 MZD-F.

Dual-door Citaros B2-5 (BX64 WHH/J-L) have gone to Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) which has lent them to Go-Ahead London.

Arriva London AA
LOTS reports that orders have been placed for 30 new generation 10.5m Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV double-deckers for Norwood, 18 for route 196 (Norwood Junction-Elephant & Castle) and 12 for Superloop SL6 (West Croydon-Russell Square), also 66 BYD BD11 10.9m double-deckers for Palmers Green for routes 34 (Barnet Church-Walthamstow Central), 141 (Palmers Green-London Bridge) and Superloop SL1 (Walthamstow Central-North Finchley).

Further H40/20D-seated Wright StreetDeck Electroliners into service are ES159/60 (LV74 CEN/O) which were originally expected to be LY24 FXM/O. Similar ES145 (LY24 FWW) has entered service at Brixton Tram Depot.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400s T98, 104/5/8 (LJ59 LYX/A/C/G) have passed to Central Connect.

BODY TYPE

AB	Articulated single-deck bus
AC	Articulated coach
B	Rigid single-deck bus
C	Coach
DP	Dual purpose, usually coach seats in a bus shell
H	Double-decker
L	Lowbridge double-decker with side sunken gangway upstairs. All other double-deckers are H (highbridge) regardless of overall height.
M	Minibus
O	Permanent open-top
CO	Convertible open-top
PO	Partial open-top

SEATING CAPACITY
For double-deckers, this is shown with the upper deck capacity first (e.g. 43/30, indicating 43 'over' 30. Where the split is not known, a total figure (e.g. 73) is shown in the same style as for single-deckers. The total seating capacity shown includes all fixed and tip-up seats. The vehicles themselves may show other permutations of seats, standing spaces and wheelchair capacity.

DOOR POSITION

F	Front (can be directly behind front axle on vehicles with no front overhang)
R	Rear
RD	Rear with platform doors
C	Centre
D	Dual (two) doors
T	Triple doors

The letter 't' after the door position indicates the provision of a toilet, while 'L' after the door position shows that a wheelchair lift is fitted.

REGISTRATIONS
Registration numbers first issued from 1 September 2001 show a two-letter area identification code (e.g. BU for Birmingham, CU for Swansea, SX for Inverness), followed by a two-digit code indicating the period of first registration (e.g. 51 for September 2001 to February 2002, 02 for March to August 2002, 52 for September 2002 to February 2003, 03 for March to August 2003 and so on. These are followed by a three-letter identification of the vehicle itself. In 'Fleet News', a batch of vehicles with consecutively issued registrations will be shown in the following fashion: LS34-46 (GG51 PYS/T/V-Z, PZB-F/H). The letters I and Q are not used in these three-letter combinations.

Where a vehicle has been re-registered, its previous registration number(s) (where known) follow in italic type (e.g. RM48 (LDS 199A, *VLT 48*), with the most recent given first.

WHERE TO SEND REPORTS
English and Welsh reports (no photographs) should be sent to: John G. Lidstone, 76 Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2XD, marking your envelope 'Fleet News' (mail sent to the previous address in Shoeburyness will no longer be forwarded. Mail not marked 'Fleet News' may miss our publication deadline) E-mail text messages (no attachments or photographs, please) to: busesfleetnews@gmail.com
Twitter @John_Lidstone

Chatham Davis Estate Maidstone 101
arriva
arrivabus.co.uk
SK74 AXS

Latest double-deckers for Arriva Southern Counties are 14 Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs diverted from Arriva Yorkshire following the emergency closure of its Belle Isle depot in Wakefield. This is 6569 (SK74 AXS). MARTIN SMITH

Arriva Midlands AA
New generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV seed vehicle AR74 ZEB arrived here in October, numbered DM01-MD and painted green.

B45F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro300 CX58 EVP has been transferred from Arriva North East, while B41F-seated Mercedes-Benz Citaro O530 3008/31 (BJ12 YPT, BD12 DHJ), B45F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 3129 (YX17 NND) and VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar B44F 3731 (YJ57 BRV) have come from Arriva the Shires.

Optare Versa 2973 (YJ60 LUR) is another recipient of the new lilac and grey Shrewsbury park-&-ride livery.

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Optare Versa 2996 (YJ58 PHX).

Arriva North East AA
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 7595 (YX16 OKB) received Christmas vinyls.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 7511 (NK57 GXD) was returned by Arriva Yorkshire as it is full height; it was replaced by lowheight 7514 (NK09 FMZ).

Ex-London Enviro400 7510 (LJ56 VTL) has been reinstated.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 1352 (CX58 EVP) has been transferred to Arriva Midlands.

Arriva North West & Wales AA
Further new Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC in Liverpool City Region Combined Authority livery of yellow and grey are 2750-81 (YY74 LVH/J-P/R-X/Z, LWA/C/D, OAX/Z, OBA-H/J-L). The first examples are allocated to Birkenhead, but vehicle familiarisation has been taking place at several depots. The batch of 46 will be numbered 2750-95 and shared between Birkenhead (16), Green Lane (ten), South Liverpool (six), Runcorn (eight) and Southport (six).

Hydrogen fuel-cell Alexander Dennis Enviro400FCEV City double-deckers 4900-9 (SK23 CMO/U/V/X, SK73 CVN, SK23 CMZ, CNA/C/E/F) have been returned to Alexander Dennis for modifications.

Wright Gemini 2DL 4491 (MX61 AUR), Volvo B5LH/Wright Gemini 2 4510 (MX13 AEM) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 4580 (YX64 VPV), 4640 (CX15 BXR) received remembrance poppy vinyls on their fleet livery.

Volvo B7TL/Alexander Dennis ALX400 4123 (CX06 EBD) has been withdrawn; it was the last of the batch.

Arriva Southern Counties AA
Optare Versa V1110 4225 (KX62 JNV) was reinstated at Southend in October.

Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 6144 (FJ56 OBE), loaned to Arriva the Shires, has been withdrawn.

Also withdrawn are VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 3730 (YJ57 BRF), Volvo B7TL/TransBus ALX400 6401/30 (GN04 UDM, UEX), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 6544/5/7/8/53-5 (YX16 OJP/R/T/U, OKB-D).

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 4212 (FJ58 KXL) has passed to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer).

Arriva the Shires AA
Mercedes-Benz Citaro O530 3008/31 (BJ12 YPT, BD12 DHJ), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 3129 (YX17 NND) and VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 3731 (YJ57 BRV) have been transferred to Arriva Midlands.

Arriva Yorkshire AA
Lowheight Alexander Dennis Enviro400 7514 (NK09 FMZ) has been transferred from Arriva North East in exchange for full height 7511 (NK57 GXD).

VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar CX58 EWZ has been numbered 1434 here.

Sky-blue fleet livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 1945/6 (SN15 LPE/F); 1945 was previously in Sapphire livery.

Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 1701 (YJ13 FJZ) has been withdrawn, while Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) has taken VDL SB200/Wright Commander 1409 (YJ57 BVT) for scrap.

Aston Manor, Birmingham
C34FLt-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach NC74 AMC is new, following on from C57Ft-seated VDL Futura FHD2-129 AC24 AMC.

Astons, Earls Croome, Worcs
Yutong TC9 midicoach YK74 PCZ was new in September.

Atlantic, Bolton
Scania K360CB4/Irizar i6S C53FLt AT74 ATC, NTC, YN74 XXA/B were new in September.

Atlantic, Heywood
C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 integral YH24 MEV was new in July.

Ausden Clark, Leicester
C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 coach AC74 ACG was new in September.

Baker, Moreton-in-Marsh
New in September were C57FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/3 MB/YB74 MTB.

Bakers Dolphin, Weston-super-Mare
New in November was C57FLt-seated Irizar i8 integral BD74 GLD.

Bayliss, Eythorne, Kent
C46Ft-seated Irizar i8 integral SU74 BAY was new in October.

Belle Vue, Heaton Chapel
C52Ft-seated Setra S416GT-HD BX63 BFA (K21 HCC) has been acquired ex-Boorman, Blunham and re-registered B6 VUE.

Scania N230UD OmniCity YR61 RUA, RVM, Alexander Dennis Enviro400 SN11 BRV/Z, BSO/U/V and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 BJ11 DTY, DVK have passed to Diamond North West.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi RX66 ZZV (*B4 VUE, RX66 ZZV*) has gone to Grayscroft, Mablethorpe, while Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BN11 UGJ (A19 VUE), Iveco/Vehixel Scolabus NX04 CVD, FD54 EKN, DC06 DDU and Fiat Ducato/Mellor Orion SJ22 HKU have also left the fleet.

Bennett, Gloucester
New here are Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV74 MYN/O (MYO is seated C53FLt) and Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante IIIA C55FLt BV74 LLK/M.

Berry, Norton Fitzwarren, Somerset
New in October was CH73Dt-seated VDL Futura FDD2-130 double-decker YG74 CUO.

Berwyn, Trefor
Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Noone Turas C33F YN13 EHH (*87 MCH, YN13 EHH*) has been acquired, ex-Parnell, Honiton and re-registered L20 CBC.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter City 45 B14 CBC reverted to original registration BP14 FKJ before being sold. Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah SC58 OAU (*C10 CBC, SC58 OAU, 09 KE 577*) has passed to Parnell, Honiton.

Bessway, North Wembley
Scania K360CB4/i6S Efficient YT24 BVW was new in August and was followed in September by Scania K360CB4/Higer Touring C43F YN74 XWM.

The Big Lemon, Brighton
Acquired in August for the Bristol fleet was Fiat Ducato/Bluebird Orion MFZ 9366, ex-Watermill, Fraserburgh, while B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX72 ONC has come from Central Connect

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GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

KUNGAY 5XIT
Border Bus
BB74 BUS

A new Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC for BorderBus, 218 (BB74 BUS), in Great Yarmouth. DAVID BELL

and B29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 YX11 CRK/U from Newport Bus for use at Brighton.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 SN06 BNO was acquired ex- Go-Ahead London in September for the **Seaford & District** fleet and numbered 809.

Brighton Horizon has C49Ft-seated Neoplan N2216SHD Tourliner P8 BWT (KAC 1, P8 BWT, YN58 OKT, 5583 HA, YN58 OKT) from Dolphin, Norwich and similar OU17 OSV from Festival Travel, Inverkeithing.

Temsa MD9 midicoach YJ17 DCX (BH17 BUS, YJ17 DCX) has passed to Mayfair, London.

Birmingham International

C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 integral YK74 PBF was new in September.

The Blackburn Bus Company TD

Transferred from The Harrogate Bus Company are Optare Versa V1170 293 (YJ68 FVX), Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1868 (FJ57 LTN), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 3613 (BF62 UXZ) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX71 OJB. The latter is a loan bus from Mistral (dealer) and was previously with BorderBus, Beccles; 1868 has received two-tone blue fleet livery.

Blackburn Private Hire, Blackburn

B40F-seated BYD K9UR integral electric LJ16 NNB has been acquired ex-CT4N, Nottingham.

BorderBus, Beccles

Further to November Fleet News, Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC BB74 BUS is seated H51/34F and numbered 218.

Brighton & Hove GA

Acquired ex-Sullivan Buses, South Mimms areH41/25D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 361-9 (AW/BW/JC/JS/PB/RM/RT/SG/WG17 SUL), which will replace the remaining Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 hybrids, of which 440/1/50 (BK10 MGV, BG61 SXS, BF62 UXR) have gone to East Yorkshire, while 442-9/51/2 (BF62 UXH/J-P/S/T) are to go to Go North West, with 452 the first of those to be sent north.

Scania K340EB4/Irizar PB 503/5 (YR58 RUH, UK59 BCL) have been transferred to Go South West.

Open-top Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 616 (GX03 SSV) is being converted into a tree-lopper.

British Blue Tours, Birkenhead

Acquired are Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini BX54 DFU ex-National Express West Midlands, TransBus Trident/ALX400 WA04 FOD from Peoplesbus. Liverpool and Scania K360IB4/Higer Touring YN22 YLT ex-Harry Shaw, Coventry.

Bullock, Cheadle

DAF DB250/TransBus ALX400 LJ03 MWF and Scania K400EB6/Irizar RB11 BUL have passed to Price, Bickershaw (dealer) for scrap.

The Burnley Bus Company TD

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 2017 (SK70 BWO) has received Transdev Go two-tone grey livery.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 61-3 (WP21 FGM-O) have been transferred to Yorkshire Coastliner.

Cardiff Bus

Two-tone orange fleet livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 264 (CN64 FWM).

Mercedes-Benz Citaro 121 (CN65 ABF) is out of service following accident damage sustained on October 28.

Carousel Buses GA

A third bus repainted in Flight Line 102 livery is Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 613 (JG64 OXF) is a third transferred from Oxford Bus Company and repainted in Flightline 102 livery. Contrary to last month's report, 610/2 (PK/GA18 OXF) remain in Oxford.

Further Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 transferred from Thames Travel are 227/40 (SF/VF10 OXF).

Withdrawn are Scania OmniDekka/East Lancs 241/3/5 (YN56 FFT, YN05 GZJ, YN55 NFO), the last of their type here.

Carver, Little Sutton, Cheshire

C37F-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach YK74 PCV was new in September.

Celtic Travel, Llanidloes

Scania K360IB4 Touring/Higer Touring C42FLt LL74 CEL was new in October.

C30Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourino BX06 UMY (*T100 TVC, BX06 UMY, THZ 8362, BX06 UMY, WET 880, BX06 UMY, WET 880, BX06 UMY, WET 880, BX06 UMY*) is here from Tanat Valley, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

Yutong TC9 midicoaches LL16 CEL and LL66 CEL have been re-registered DU16 YXD, DU66 LPL respectively, the latter passing to Eagle Cars, Watford. Volvo B12M/Plaxton Panther CT/DT06 EBT have gone to Abbey Coaches, Birmingham. Other disposals are of Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther KX07 HFH to 1st Call, Merthyr Tydfil and Mercedes-Benz Tourino BC08 NBC (*BNZ 5829, B9 VNL, BC08 NBC*) to Keepings, Aberaman, both via Procter, Leeming Bar (dealer).

Central Connect

New in July and August were B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 357-64/8-71 (YY24 HBA-H/N-P/U) and H51/34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 502/3 (YX24 PLU/V). Similar Enviro200 MMC 338 (YX72 ONC) has gone to The Big Lemon, Brighton.

Former Arriva London H41/24D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400s acquired for schools services are 585-8 (LJ59 LYA/C/G/X), which are to be converted to single-door layout and be allocated to the Flagfinders or Simonds fleets.

Central Travel, Sheffield

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 LK08 FNH has been re-registered JH54 CTS, while a similar vehicle has become P14 CTS.

Scania K114IB4/Irizar Intercentury JH54 CTS has been withdrawn and reverted to original registration YN56 NRX.

Centrebus CB

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter/Ilesbus WX74 RYC has been painted in fleet livery, numbered 2005 and allocated to Grantham.

B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 5003/4 (YX68 ULT/U) have been acquired from Falcon, Byfleet; they are white with Bingham Connect lettering.

Chalfont, Southall

Scania K360CB4/Irizar i6S C53FLt YT24 BUV was new in June.

Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante III BV73 ZTJ/K have gone to Galloway, Mendlesham.

Chalkwell, Sittingbourne

Treka B16FL-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinters acquired from non-PSV local authority fleets are 513CDi KN15 XTT, XWE from Birmingham City Council and 514CDi KN66 BSZ from London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 LJ61 CFX and GN61 JRZ have been re-registered K29 CWL and L31 CWL respectively.

Chris Cars, Carmarthen

C53Ft-seated Irizar i6 integral YT74 EFE was new in October.

Chivers, Sanderstead, Surrey

New in September was C39FL-seated Temsa MD9 midicoach YJ74 BYW.

Collier, Earith, Cambs

Acquired are Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs H80F YN03 DFL (*789 FAY*) from Greys of Ely, Witchford, Dennis Trident/East Lancs Lolyne H53/34F V434/5 DRA from Lodge, High Easter, Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H44/30F SN56 AGO (*PB04 BUS*) from Xelabus, Eastleigh and since re-registered AYZ 5039, and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini LF52 UPG, LK04 HYM, HZG/J, JCZ from Ellie Rose, Hull.

Compass Bus, Worthing

Acquired ex-Simonds, Diss are Volvo B7RLE/MCV Evolution B44F 3401 (BU14 EHY) new to WebberBus, Bridgwater and Volvo B8RLE/MCV Evolution B45F 3402 (BN64 CNY) new as a Volvo demonstrator. Both are plain white, based at Worthing.

Previously plain white, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 4128 (YX63 GXR) has received fleet livery.

Connexions Buses, Tockwith, N Yorks

National Express West Midlands' only Scania N230UD OmniCity double-deckers, H45/31F-seated BV57 XKY/Z, XLA and BU08 EHZ were acquired from Birmingham Busworks (dealer) in October.

Creigiau Travel

C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 integral YH24 MFZ was new in July.

Acquired is C48Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo YCZ 233 (*NH16 LEH*). It has reverted to original registration NH16 LEH

Bova Futura BC06 BBC was re-registered CF06 LKG before disposal.

Sold are Scania K114IB4/Irizar S-kool SN53 RWY to 1st Call, Merthyr Tydfil, tri-axle Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther SP07 CAE to Lawson, Corby via Drew Wilson, Carluke (dealer), Scania K360IB4/Irizar i6 YN66 VSB to Mitchell, Plean and Yutong TC12 YL17 BFP to Pelican, Castleford (dealer).

CT4N, Nottingham

BYD K9UR electric single-decker 983 (LJ16 NMY) has passed to Blackburn Private Hire.

Cymru Coaches, Waunarlwydd

C53FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 GE70 GWE (*BV70 UAP, GE70 GWE*) has been acquired from Goldwings, Hayes.

Volvo B11R/Jonckheere JHV2 G21 CYM reverted to original registration LJ17 WVA before sale to Lloyd, Hixon (dealer) and Van Hool EX15H integral B22 CYM (*YJ68 CEX, B22 CYM, YJ68 CEX*) reverted to YJ68 CEX pre-sale.

Sold are Van Hool EX15Hs WA14 DTX to Westerbus, Gairloch and YJ68 CCX to Bestway, Bolton, Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther YN11 AYH (*B14 CYM, YN11 AYH*) to Henry Cooper, Annitsford, Scania CN230UB OmniCity MIG 8173 (*YT09 BKU*) to Hairy Haggis, Harthill and similar YR10 AZT to Mulleys, Ixworth.

D&G Bus CB

Further new Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa are B38F-seated 6013-6 (BU74 YVH/J-L); they carry the new fleet livery.

Diamond Midlands RO

Further new Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Ilesbus B20F at Tividale are 15013/4 (WX74 RXN/O).

Withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 21224/5 (LN19 UBE/F) and Optare Versa 30910 (JB08 MCL, *YK08 EPA*).

Diamond North West RO

Expanding last month's report, nine former Belle Vue, Heaton Chapel double-deckers have been acquired for Transport for Greater Manchester schools services. They are Scania N230UD OmniCity 40031/2 (YR61 RUA, RVM), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 40528-32 (SN11 BRV/Z, BSO/U/V) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 40630/1 (BJ11 DTY, DVK); 40529 has received fleet livery and 40630 had a brief spell on loan to Preston Bus.

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 40627-9 (BJ15 TWF/G/K) have been transferred from Preston Bus, also for TfGM school services.

Wright StreetDeck 40761 (MX20 KYU) has lost its Pride overall scheme for Bee Network yellow.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban training vehicle 69157 (MX06 VNN) has been transferred from Preston Bus, while Wright StreetDeck 40834 (MX21 AVG) has made the opposite move.

Ripley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer training vehicle 31001 (S517 JJH).

Diamond South East RO

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Alexander Dennis Enviro200s 28336/41 (SN08 ACU, ADO).

East Yorkshire GA

Transferred in are Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H41/25F 20818-7/9-31 (NK62 CBV, CCV/Y, CEN, CFN, CJE/J, CKC, CME, CYC/F, CZA/L) from Go North East and similar H41/23F-seated 20832-4 (BK10 MGV, BG61 SXS, BF62 UXR) from Brighton & Hove. All existing East Yorkshire buses will eventually have 20,000 added to their fleetnumbers.

VDL Futura FHD2-139 WD14 ZWR (*Y20 DLC, WD14 ZWR, C111 EFS*) was transferred from Go South West in November.

Edwards, Llantrisant

A rare acquisition, to support the company's centenary in 2025 is 1931 Thurgood C35F-bodied Maudslay ML3BC/4LW coach PSL 234 (*ABD 812A, NV 30*) which has been in preservation since September 1961. It will be painted grey with red relief and lettering for Edwards Bros (Beddau).

New coaches are Iveco 70C21/Ilesbus C33FL RK74 ZPX, delivered in September, and Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante IIIA C55FLt BV24 ZFD/F/M/Z, ZGA-D/K-N/S-U/W-Y, ZHA-C new before then.

Neoplan Tourliner N2216/3SHDLs OV24 VNR/S are seated C61FLt and not C55FLt as reported previously.

C38Ft-seated Irizar i8 integral YS17 UFJ, the former Fulham FC team coach, has been acquired from The Kings Ferry for use as a team coach here, re-registered T1 EAM.

Other coaches acquired over the past year were C49Ft-seated Irizar i6 YS18 NSK from KB Coaches, Eastington, C44Ft-seated Irizar i8 integral YT68 LCE (*LJ68 LLJ, YT68 LCE*) from Llew Jones, Llanrwst, MAN 18.310/Marcopolo Viaggio II C70F PN05 BJY, King Long XMQ6900 BX14 KNY from Mainline Coaches, Gilfach Goch. The i8 has been re-registered BU55 AFC.

Also re-registered are Volvo B12B/Jonckheere JHV PN09 HGM (*UD 1100, PN09 HGM*) to DAZ 1573 , similar PN09 HGU (*6267 HA, PN09 HGU*) to EAZ 2596, Volvo B12B/Jonckheere JHV PN09 HGL (*7351 RU, PN09 HGL*) to DAZ 1553, PN09 HGO/P (*8466 RU, PN09 HGO; 8527 RU, PN09 HGP*) to EAZ 2593/4 respectively, Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante FJ11 GKY to T64 BHY, FJ12 FXC/M/S/X, FYE to PIL 7240, TIL 1690, 6474, PIL 8379, SIL 5382 and VDL Futura FHD2-129/370 WJ16 KBO/P/V, KCN/O to T222, 700, 777 EDW, P444, 600 EDW.

Volvo B12M/Jonckheere Mistral 50 553 UXP has reverted to its original registration YC02 DJD, Bova Futura FHD12.370 K500 EDW back to original WA03 EYH.

National Express coaches withdrawn are Scania K410EB6/Caetano Boa Vista double-deckers BV66 WPJ-L/O, BU18 OTA/B/D; Scania K360EB4/Caetano Levante BX65 WBW/Y/Z, WCD/G; tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante BV17 GUO/U/W, BV67 JYA/D/E; Scania K410EB6/Caetano Levante III BV19 XOJ-N, BV22 VTT-X, BV72 XFD/M-P/R. Bus & Coach Centre, Forest Hill (dealer) has taken BV66 WPJ-N, Mobico-owned Lucketts Group has BU18 OTB, BV72 XFM-O, Adventure Travel has BV67 JYA/E and South Lakes Travel has BV67 JYD.

Also withdrawn are Setra S416GT-HD integrals L600, 700, 800 EDW (*BX07 NMA/O/U*), Bova Futura FHD12-340 R59 BJC (*A12 APT, R59 BHC, B4 OVA, RXO 828, R759 CWY, 152 JUP, R759 CWY*), R300 RMS (*OBX 51, R300 RMS*), TransBus Javelin/Caetano Cutlass HX53 ODK, MAN 18.310/Marcopolo Viaggio II CN54 LGE, Neoplan Starliners PVV 315 (*ML13 XNZ*) and SOI 196 (*PK62 VUX*), and Van Hool T917 Astron Y8 EDW (*YJ11 AOC*).

Sold for further operation were Dennis Javelin/Plaxton Premiere 320 R687 TTS and Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Panther W288 JBN (*YAP 104, W288 JBN*) to Creigiau Travel; Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Beaver 2 YN56 DZF to Coracle Coaches, Carmarthen; Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Autobus Nouvelle 2 YX54 BGV to Squirrell Travel, Hitcham; Mercedes-Benz Atego/Sitcar Marlin WA08 GRZ (*P16 EDW, WA08 GRZ*) to Parnell, Honiton and on to Wilros Transport, Castlerea; tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante BX16 CHN to Endeavour Coaches, Birmingham, similar BX16 CKN, CLN to KT Coaches, Kendal, BX16 CLJ to Celtic Travel, Llanidloes, TransBus Trident/ALX400 SN53 KJV and Optare Versa V1100 YJ09 OTS to private buyers, Van Hool T917 Astron P600 EDW (*YJ08 NTT, BU55 WRU, YJ08 NTT*) and BU55 AFC (*BU55 WRU*) to Ukraine, Bedford YMT/Plaxton Supreme IV JMA 880T to Camperholics, Three Cocks and Setra S416GT-HDs BX07 NMA/O/U (*L600, 700, 800 EDW; BX07 NMA/O/U*) for export via Odyssey Coach Sales.

Odyssey has also taken Van Hool T917 Astron YJ11 AOC (*Y8 EDW, YJ11 AOC*) and Volvo B11RT/Caetano Levante BN64 FKY/Z.

Also sold was Mercedes-Benz Vario O813D/Plaxton Beaver 2 YN07 BML.

Re-registered before being sold for scrap were Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere BHZ 1260 (*3801 RU, N684 YUJ, WT 8590, N908 EWD*) to N908 EWD, Bova Futura K700 EFW to CN51 SUF and VDJ 660 to P140 GPD before sale. Also sold for scrap are Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere R704 RNN (*YKG 53, R704 RNN*), Dennis Javelin/Caetano Cutlass

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

V670-3 FPO, Y336 YUT, TransBus Javelin/Caetano Cutlass HX03 MHK, HX53 ODJ, Dennis Javelin/Plaxton Prima CT02 NAE (*SX02 WDS*), TransBus Javelin/Plaxton Profile TC53 TLC, Setra S415HD BX04 NBG (*978 HHT, BX04 NBG*), Bova Futuras M259 BGF, R59 BJC (*A12 APT, R59 BJC, B4 OVA, RXO 828, R759 CWY, 152 JUP, R759 CWY*) and R300 RMS (*OBX 51, R300 RMS*).

Ellenvale, Fletchertown, Cumbria
Acquired are Optare Solo M850 HIG 4437 (*YN53 EMK*) ex-Hodson, Clitheroe and Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah C29F YN51 WGU ex-Hatch Green Coaches, Hatch Beauchamp. The latter has been re-registered D8 PSV.

Ellie Rose Travel, Hull
Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini YX06 CXO has been acquired from Go North West.

Ensignbus FG
Wright StreetDeck 168-70 (LX71 AOB-D) have passed to Preston Bus, while open-top Volvo B7L/Ayats Bravo 370/1 (EU05 VBO/L) have been sold for conversion to mobile display units

Eurocoaches, Yate
New in September was Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi/Mellor Strata B21F WX74 RXD.

Falcon, Byfleet
Thirteen B37F-seated 10.9m new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV have been ordered to electrify routes 436 (Woking-Weybridge) and 461 (Kingston-Chertsey). Delivery is expected in 2026.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX68 ULT/U have passed to Centrebus.

Fernhill Travel, Winkfield, Berkshire
C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 integral YK74 OZR was new in October.

First Cymru FG
Yutong U11DD double-deck demonstrator YD73 FTP was trialled on TrawsCymru service T1 (Aberystwyth-Carmarthen) from October 26.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban training vehicle 66940 (WX55 TZB) was returned from First Midlands West by early November.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 44457 (YX09 HKF) has been withdrawn.

First Eastern Counties FG
Wright StreetDeck 35112 (OIG 1791, *SO15 CUV*) has been transferred from First Hampshire & Dorset, while similar 35291 (SL67 VXV), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H45/29F 37711/22/5 (YJ09 OBF/T/W) have come from First West Yorkshire and B41F-seated Wright StreetLite Max 63141/4 (SN14 DWU/X) are from First South Yorkshire.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 67406 (SN13 CKC) has been transferred to First Essex.

First Essex FG
Red and black Yutong U11DD electric double-deck demonstrator YD73 FTP visited Basildon for inspection and type training ahead of the planned introduction of 55 Yutongs during 2025.

Transferred in are H45/30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33730 (SN12 AMK) from First Hampshire & Dorset and B41F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro300 67406 (SN13 CKC) from First Eastern Counties, the latter received in Ipswich Reds livery.

613 Bradford
First Bus
69501
BJ10 VGD

Bradford-based First West Yorkshire 69501 (BJ10 VGD), a Wright Eclipse 2-bodied Volvo B7RLE transferred from First Manchester, is an early recipient of the group's new national livery. It had been painted in Bee Network yellow for its previous role. DANIEL STAZICKER

On loan from Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) for use at Colchester are plain white Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33590/3 (SN09 CFD/G). They have regained the fleetnumbers they had when new to First London, having subsequently been Metroline London TE1730/3.

Further recipients of national livery are Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33657/76 (SN12 ADV, AEX), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 33986 (SN65 OGB), Wright StreetLite Max 63064 (SK63 KKE), 63342 (SM65 EFA) and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 67735 (SN62 AHL).

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 32547 (SF54 OSK), 32669 (SN55 HDZ), 37004/37 (WX55 VHN, YJ06 XLC) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 67162/89 (YY66 OZX, SN66 WKK); 67162 was destroyed by fire and has gone for scrap. Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 32532 (YJ05 VUY).

First Hampshire & Dorset FG
H45/28F-seated Wright StreetDeck 35617-20 (YJ70 BGX-Z, BHA) have been transferred from First West Yorkshire.

Open-top Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 36100 (LX60 DXB) has returned here from First South West.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33730 (SN12 AMK) has been transferred to First Essex, while Wright StreetDeck 35112 (SO15 CUV) has been re-registered OIG 1791 and transferred to First Eastern Counties. Wright StreetLite Max 63306 (SN65 OLK) has gone to First West Yorkshire.

Open-top Volvo B7TL/Alexander ALX400 32031/3 (OIG 6947, RKZ 4760) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 32329/43 (620 HOD, TPR 354) have been withdrawn.

First Leicester FG
H45/28F-seated Wright StreetDeck 35271 (SL67 VWX) has been transferred here from First South Yorkshire.

StreetDecks 35188-92 (SK16 GVL-P) have been re-registered CMZ 5305-8, XIG 1739 respectively.

EVM-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi 54153 (WUI 8490) has been transferred to York Pullman.

First Manchester FG
Wright StreetLite Max 63355/69/71/6 (SM65 WNB, SL16 RAU, RBF/Y) have transferred in from First South Yorkshire, while similar 63105 (SM13 NCF) has gone to First West Yorkshire

First South West FG
Open-top Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 36100 (LX60 DXB) has been returned to First Hampshire & Dorset.

First South Yorkshire FG
Transferred out are Wright StreetDeck 35271 (SL67 VWX) to First Leicester, Wright StreetLite Max 63141/4 (SN14 DWU/X) to First Eastern Counties and 63355/69/71/6 (SM65 WNB, SL16 RAU, RBF/Y) to First Manchester.

First West of England FG
H45/28F-seated Wright StreetDeck 35567 (SK19 EZS) has been transferred from First West Yorkshire.

First West Yorkshire FG
B41F-seated Wright StreetLite Max 63105 (SM13 NCF) has come from First Manchester, similar 63306 (SN65 OLK) from First Hampshire & Dorset.

Further recipients of First national livery are Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33872 (SL14 LNC) and and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 69582 (BT13 YVY).

Wright StreetDeck Wright StreetDeck 35291 (SL67 VXV) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37711/22/5 (YJ09 OBF/T/W) have been transferred to First Eastern Counties, while StreetDecks 35617-20 (YJ70 BGX-Z, BHA) have gone to First Hampshire & Dorset and 35567 (SK19 EZS) to First West of England.

First York FG
Wright StreetDeck Electroliner 36513/4 (MF23 ZWA/B) are named *Anne Stamp* and ***John McGall*** respectively.

Mercedes-Benz Citaro bendybus 11101 (BG58 OLR) has been sold to City Transport, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, while Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 69276 (YJ57 YSM) has also been sold.

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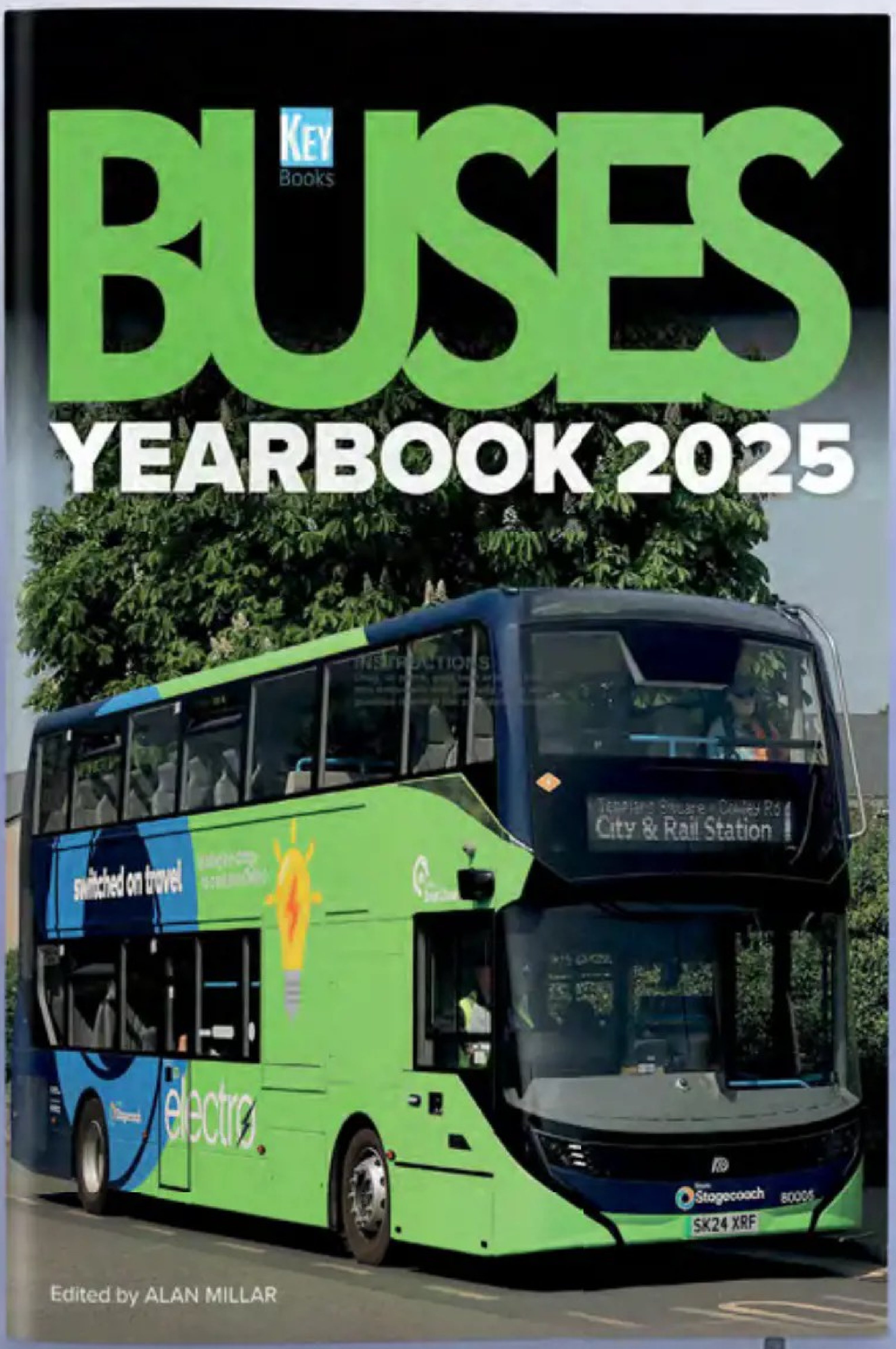

Buses Yearbook 2025 follows a proven format with a mixture of articles on current and historic developments, strictly factual ones and others of a more whimsical or personal nature, all of them accompanied by a wide selection of photographs. The present day content includes the introduction of electric buses in Oxford and London, the growing number of buses and coaches imported from China.

The historic include coaches and single-deck buses launched in 1974, an insight into the Cawlett group in southwest England, the change of identity of two municipal fleets in Scotland in 1975 and public transport integration in Tyne & Wear in the 1980s. Northumbria, Cyprus, the United States, the former kingdom of Mercia and points around the English and Welsh coast also feature in this annual favourite.

Hardback,132 pages

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Fowler, Holbeach Drove, Lincs
Volvo B8R/Plaxton Leopard C59FL AF24 WHF is new.

Galloway, Mendlesham
Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante III C55FLt 109-11 (BV73 ZTJ/K, ZXK) have been acquired from Chalfont, Southall (109/10) and Woods Coaches (110) for National Express route 717 (Ipswich-Stansted Airport).

Scania K410EB6/Caetano Levante III 102/4/7/8 (BF68 LCE/J/M/N) have gone to Woods Coaches.

Glen Valley, Wooler
Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt UK74 GVT was new in September.

Go-Ahead London GA
New BYD BD11 double-decker EBD22 (LF74 TZJ) has been delivered and EBD24 was exhibited at Euro Bus Expo in November.

B35D-seated Irizar ie Tram IE9, 10/9 are registered LJ74 BSY/Z, BTV. IE10 entered service on route b358 (Orpington-Crystal Palace) in November along with IE3, 4, 6, 8, 11/3-6 (LJ23 FHT/V, LJ73 CHV, LJ23 FHS, LJ74 BRX/V/F, BPZ/Y).

B29D-seated 10.9m BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV SEe318 (LF24 ZHE) entered service at Putney in November.

Operation of the Dartford Fastrack service was taken over from Arriva from November 10. Pending the introduction of Irizar ie Tram single-deckers, 13 diesel single-deckers have been hired and are operating in red with Fastrack logos. They are Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 B40D 6003/13 (BN14 CUH, CVB) from Metrobus, dual-door Mercedes-Benz Citaro MEC70-3 (BX64 WHH/K/L) and B27D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC SEN58-64 (BL/DS/FS/LS/SB/WB/WW66 SUL) from Ensign, Purfleet (dealer); the Citaros were previously with Apcoa at Luton Airport and the Enviro200s were with Sullivan Bus. The allocation code for the Fastrack base is FT.

Optare Metrodecker MD1050EV Me11 (YJ21 EYO) has returned to service.

Sold are Alexander Dennis Enviro400 E3, 5-8, 10-2 (SN06 BND/F/J-L/U/V/X), with 1st Bus Stop, Gravesend taking E5-7, 10.

Go-Coach Hire, Swanley
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 9012 (LK57 AYB) has been transferred from parent company Hulleys, from whom similar 9514 (SN59 AWC) has returned from a period on loan.

Go East Anglia GA
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 Y7 THG (SN59 AVY) has been transferred from Go North West.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 YX61 DVP/R have been numbered 271/2 respectively, while Wright Gemini 2DL LX58 CWG has become 540.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 470 (EU05 CLJ) was reinstated in September.

Withdrawn are Optare Versa 309 (AU11 EPE), Scania CN230UB OmniCity 464 (NK56 KJV), Scania K230UB OmniLink 465 (YN58 BCE), Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 502/21/3/5 (LF52 ZNE, LX05 EZD/F/H), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 530/5 (LX59 DCE/Y), Alexander Dennis Enviro400/Optare Olympus 650 (LX58 CWV), Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 820 (YN06 JYE) and Scania N230UD/Optare Olympus 871 (PN09 ELU).

Go Goodwins (Clwyd), Mostyn
Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C70F FD54 DHN (*Y60 HMC, FD54 DHN*) has been acquired ex-Peyton Travel, Bridgend.
DAF SB3000/Van Hool Alizée 772 URB (*M573 RCP, C3 BSS, M573 RCP*) has been withdrawn.

Go North East GA
B41F-seated 10.5m Wright StreetLite DF 8351-4 (WX12 GDV/U/Z, GEJ), new to Thamesdown, were transferred from Go South Coast in October, with 8354 the first to be repainted in red/blue fleet livery.

Wright StreetLite Max 5434-7/9 (NK16 BYS/T, BXZ, BWY, AZU) have been repainted in purple/magenta Prince Bishops livery.

Dual-door Alexander Dennis Enviro400 6964/6 (SN60 BZG/J) have been rebuilt to H41/28F configuration.

Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 6056-63/5/6/8-70 (NK62 CBV, CCV/Y, CEN, CFN, CJE/J, CKC, CME, CYC/F, CZA/L) have been transferred to East Yorkshire.

Withdrawn are Scania L94UB/Wright Solar training vehicle 5210 (NK54 NVE), Scania CN230UB OmniCity training vehicles 5243/54 (NK56 KHM, KJA) and tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante 7128 (BX16 CKL).

Alpha Recovery, Weetslade (dealer) has taken Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 6126/34/47/8/63/5 (GX03 SUY; YN04 GJU; YN05 GZP, *CU 6860, YN05 GZP*; YN05 GZR, *CU 7661, YN05 GZR*; YN04 AOM/R) and ex-Lothian Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 6178 (SN57 DFP) for scrap.

Open-top DAF DB250/Plaxton President 6998 (LJ51 DKF, *794 EYD, LJ51 DKF*) has been sold for preservation.

Go North West GA
New in Bee Network livery are the balance of Wright StreetDeck Electroliner 2114-9 (MF74 NTX, NUA-C/E/H) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 5202-4 (YX74 OEB-D).

In from Brighton & Hove and painted in base yellow is Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H41/23F 3088 (BF62 UXS). Similar BF62 UXH/J-P/T are expected to follow it.

Further recipients of Bee Network livery are Wright StreetDeck 3409/10/6/41/86 (SO19 MWD/E, MX20 HVH, KYF, MX70 APV), 3500 (MX21 AUN), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 4034 (YY16 YJJ) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 6157/62 (WA12 ADO, BG14 OOU).

Go North West fleet livery has been applied to Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 6161 (BG14 OOJ) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 L4565/6 (YX63 LLE/F), with L4565/6 being renumbered 4043/4. They are expected to be used on school services.

Wright StreetDeck 3452 (MX20 KYW) was deroofed near Bolton depot on November 26.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 3119 (Y7 THG, SN59 AVY) has been transferred to Go East Anglia, while Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 3358 (YX06 CXO) has been sold to Ellie Rose, Hull.

Go South Coast GA
New generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV seed vehicle GA74 ZEB is here.

Internal transfers have moved Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 221 (HF67 EUB), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 1254 (LX56 ETR) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 6906 (LX06 EBG) from Bluestar to Damory and

Pending their electrification with new Irizar ie Tram single-deckers, Go-Ahead London has assembled a temporary fleet of dual-door single-deckers to operate the Fastrack rapid transit services in north Kent. Two Wright Eclipse 2-bodied Volvo B7RLEs on loan from Metrobus include 6003 (BN14 CUH). KRIS LAKE

Amazon LCY3
6003
fastrack
BN14 CUH

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 1651-3 (HF66 CGG/K, CHD) from Morebus to Southern Vectis.

Livery changes have seen Enviro400 1607 (HF65 AYA) lose X7 livery for Bluestar standard and Optare Solo 3833 (HF15 BMV) lose Morebus for Salisbury Reds.

Morebus Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking convertible open-topper 1822 (HF54 KXU) has received in a purple-based wrap celebrating local athletes who competed at the 2024 Olympics.

Wright StreetLite DF 411/2/4/5 (WX12 GEJ, GDZ/V/U), new to Thamesdown, were transferred to Go North East in October.

Go South West GA

Scania K340EB4/Irizar PB C49Ft YR58 RUH and UK59 BCL have been transferred from Brighton & Hove for the Dartline fleet.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 City 565 (WA17 FTZ) carries a green overall advertisement for Black History, Plymouth.

VDL Futura FHD2-139 1114 (Y20 DLC, *WD14 ZWR, C111 EFS*) reverted to WD14 ZWR before being transferred to East Yorkshire in November.

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Alexander Dennis Enviro200 136/61 (WA08 LDF, YX09 FLV) and accident damaged Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 5015 (WA70 DZP).

Volvo B12M/Plaxton Paragon 316 (WA03 MGJ, *JSK 265, WA03 MGJ*) passed to Watts, Bonvilston in October.

Grange Travel, Gravesend

Another coach acquired with the VIP business of The Kings Ferry was C32Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BF23 CKV.

Grindle, Cinderford, Glos

New in October was C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 integral GR74 DLE.

GSAL Transport, Leeds

B51F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro300 SN57 DXD has been acquired via Wilsons Auctions, Birtley and repainted white. It was new to Luton Borough Council and was later with Hartlepool Council.

Hams Travel, Flimwell East Sussex

Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B46F MC74 HAM was new in November.

B37F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 KX57 BWE (*A3 TKT, KX57 BWE*) has been acquired from TK Travel, Burghfield Common.

Hammond, Nottingham

C53Ft-seated VDL Futura FHD2-129 coach YG74 CVB was new in September.

Hardings, Betchworth, Surrey

C37F-seated Isuzu AOS GT midicoach GU74 MGJ was new in September.

Harris, Fleur de Lis

Withdrawn are Alexander Dennis Enviro200 11 (DK09 OBH, *LL06 WYN*) and Optare Solo M920 34 (MX05 EMK). Volvo B12M/Jonckheere Mistral 18 (MX03 AEF, *WJZ 2931, MX03 AEF*) and Optare Solo M850 31 (CU57 AFN) have gone for scrap.

The first 20 Mercedes-Benz eCitaros for a UK operator have gone into service with The Harrogate Bus Company on its Harrogate/Knaresborough corridor. They include 1006 (BV74 NFA). DANIEL STAZICKER

The Harrogate Bus Company TD

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H41/28F 2428 (BF62 UXY) has been transferred from Yorkshire Coastliner. It is in grey/black 40 Countries, One Team livery.

Optare Versa V1170 293 (YJ68 FVX), Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1868 (FJ57 LTN), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 3613 (BF62 UXZ) and Mistral loan vehicle Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX71 OJB have passed to The Blackburn Bus Company.

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1700 (H3 ESU, *BU03 SXK*).

Healings Travel, Oldham

C53FLt-seated Temsa HD12 RG74 DDE is new.

Hearns, Watford

C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 coaches YK74 PDO/Y were new in October.

Henleys, Abertillery

C37F-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach CA24 VCC (*PA24 BUS*) has been acquired, ex-Phil Anslow, Varteg Hill, via Pelican, Castleford (dealer).

Optare Solo M710SE YJ59 GFV has been sold to Phil Anslow, while Solos YJ05 WCD and YJ06 FYV have also been withdrawn.

Henshaw, Moreton-in-Marsh

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/3 DJ74 HEN was new in September.

Hodgson, Barnard Castle

Yutong TC9 midicoach NJ74 VDZ was new in October.

Hopleys, Mount Hawke, Cornwall

New Temsa coaches are C39FL-seated MD9 midicoach WK24 CAF C57FL-seated HD13 WK74 DAF and C57FLt-seated HD13 WK74 JAF.

Hulleys, Baslow

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 6317 (MX11 CZM) and Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa 9121 (Y100 HOB) have received the new fleet livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 9012 (LK57 AYB) has been transferred to Go-Coach.

Ipswich Buses

DAF DB250/East Lancs Myllennium Lowlander 59 (PJ53 OLB) has been withdrawn. Similar 56/7 (PN52 XBK/J) have been sold, as have ex-Bus Éireann Alexander Dennis Enviro200 71/2 (LX58 LMO/M, *09 D 3524/0*), with 72 passing to Suffolk Travel, Ipswich.

Jewitt, Chollerford, Northumberland

C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 coach NJ74 VEK was new in September.

John's Travel, Nantyglo

Mercedes-Benz Atego 1021L/Erduman C27F YN18 CPE has been acquired from City Circle, Newbridge.

Johnson, Worksop

The last remaining ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian here, B738 GCN, has been sold for preservation.

Johnsons, Henley-in-Arden CTG

New here is C37F-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach YD24 ETO.

OR Jones & Sons, Llanfaethlu

Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah YN03 NHH has been withdrawn.

Jones Login, Whitland

C57FLt-seated Temsa HD13 integral 521 WDE is new.

Alexander Dennis Javelin/Plaxton Profile C70F YDE 679 (*CU57 AKF*) and Mercedes-Benz Vario O813/Plaxton Beaver 3 YN57 PZD are back in service.

KB Coaches, Eastington, Glos

Scania K360CB4/MOBIpeople Premium 350 C72FL YT24 BNA was new in May, followed in October by C57FLt-seated Temsa HD13 integral YJ74 BYB.

The Keighley Bus Company TD

BMC Condor 220 schoolbus 1303 (YK56 LJZ) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1729-33 (YJ07 PBY, PCO/U/X, PDK) have been reinstated.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 69 (WP21 FHB) has been transferred to Team Pennine.

Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown 1336 (X557 YUG) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1808 (JRZ 1808, *YJ05 KHF*) have passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Kinchbus WG

B30F-seated plain white Alexander Dennis Enviro200 272 (SN69 ZLE) has been transferred from TM Travel to replace fire damaged Optare Solo 7 (YJ07 EFX) on university campus shuttles.

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Shrewsbury 501
Lakeside
Lakeside OF ELLESMERE
SY74 LAK

Lakeside of Ellesmere, now part of First, has purchased MCV EvoRa-bodied Volvo B8RLE SY74 LAK for tendered service 501 (Ellesmere-Shrewsbury). SY is the postcode for Shrewsbury. CHRIS CLEGG

The Kings Ferry MO
Mercedes-Benz Tourismo L 6107/12/3 (BV72 YBC, BF23 CKO/X) were transferred to Lucketts Group in July.

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo 3201 (BF23 CKV) is another VIP coach sold to Grange Travel, Gravesend, while Irizar i8 integral 3806 (YS17 UFJ) has passed to Edwards, Llantrisant.

Lakeside, Ellesmere FG
New in November for tendered service 501 (Ellesmere-Shrewsbury) is Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B46F SY74 LAK. Its Select registration incorporates the Shrewsbury postcode and the operator's name.

Laser Travel, Tonypandy
C53Flt-seated Temsa Safari HD12 LA74 SER was new in October.

Acquired are Volvo B10M-62/Van Hool Alizée C49Ft W282 JBN (*ECL 732, W282 JBN, JAZ 3562, 82 JBN*) from Judd, Guyhirn and re-registered YCZ 766 Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere 320 C70F P168 KBD (*THZ 3385, P168 KBD*) from Major, Rowley Regis.

LL Travel, Mexborough, South Yorkshire
Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53Flt BU74 YSL was new in October.

Linburg Touring, Sheffield
C61Flt-seated Irizar i6S Efficient YM24 VZX was new in July.

P&O Lloyd, Bagillt
B28F-seated Optare Solo M8500SR YJ68 FSE has passed to Pilkington, Accrington, via Stafford Bus Centre, Stone (dealer), Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M BV20 HPN has gone to South Wales Transport, Swansea and sister coach BV20 HPP has also been sold.

Lloyd, Machynlleth
Loaned Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa BV73 MMK/U have been returned.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Ilesbus WP21 XFB has received fleet livery.

Premier, Luton has returned Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC DY16 AXB (LC62 WYN), rejected as unsuitable.

Chartwell, Horsham (dealer) has sold Alexander Dennis Enviro200 SK15 HBG to Faresaver, Chippenham, PC Coaches, Lincoln has taken Optare Metrocity YJ17 FYZ and Optare Solo M9250SL YJ67 FZP, while a dealer has taken Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Beaver 2 VX05 BVU for scrap. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC SN66 WKW has also been sold.

Londoner Buses, London SW18
AEC/Park Royal Routemaster RM871 (WLT 871) has been given a blue, white and red Union Jack livery to operate a Christmas lights tour on route T2. It has been joined on the tour by loaned open-top RM371 (WLT 371) and ex-Metroline Alexander Dennis Enviro400 TE891 (LK08 NVF).

Lucketts Group MO
C61Flt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo L 6107/12/3 (BV72 YBC, BF23 CKO/X) were further coaches transferred from The Kings Ferry in July.

M&I, Lillyhall, Cumbria
New here are Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Ilesbus M16 BN74 VFV/W.

Marchants, Cheltenham
Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BU16 HBB has been acquired from Alfa, Euxton and upseated to C72FL.

Metrobus GA
Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 6003/13 (BN14 CUH, CVB) are on loan to Go-Ahead London.

Scania CN230UB OmniCity single-deckers 6631/3 (YN08 DFX/Y) have been sold to Scrapco, Paddock Wood (dealer).

Metroline London DG
The first 46 of 91 BYD BD11 double-deckers on order will be numbered BDE2985-3030.

B26D-seated 10.2m Wright GB Kite Electroliner WSE2942/3 (LV74 CCX/Y) have been delivered.

H40/20D-seated 10.6m Wright StreetDeck Electroliner WDE2806/8/60/1, 2907/8 (LV23 EBM/O, YZZ, ZBC, LV24 VOK/M) and 10.3m Volvo BZL/MCV B25D VMS2815 (LF73 DVV) entered service in November.

Metroline Manchester DG
Bee Network-liveried Wright StreetDeck WDS238/63/77/80 (MF74 NMM, NDH, NPX, NRE) are the first examples reported of a large batch of new buses.

These, along with London red-liveried Volvo BZL/MCV H43/22D demonstrator LJ24 ZKX and Volvo BZL/MCV B42F demonstrator BV72 KPG are being used for driver training and familiarisation. WDS238 is at the Stagecoach depot in Sharston, WDS263/77 at the Arriva Wythenshawe depot and WDS280 at Stagecoach Hyde Road.

Adventure Travel Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart training vehicle DT902 (LK55 KMA) is also on loan.

Former Stagecoach East Scotland Volvo B5LH/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC H47/29F VHA528/32 (SJ15 PVO, SA15 VTY), SJ15 PUY, PVN, SA15 VTW have joined the fleet and have been noted on training duties.

Stagecoach Scania N230UD OmniCity double-deckers 15381-3 (YT09 BJV, ZCA/K) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 16806/7 (MX58 DWA/C) were transferred in from Stagecoach Manchester in November in advance of Tranche 3 Bee Network operations starting.

Mid Wales Travel, Penrhyncoch
Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B46F 174 (BJ74 XNT) has received fleet livery.

VDL SB4000/Van Hool Alizée C51Ft XIJ 616 (*YJ09 CXR*) has been acquired, ex-Williams, Upper Tumble.

Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile YN53 EHZ (*X70 OXF, NDZ 70, YN53 EHZ*) has been sold.

Moving People, Clayton le Dale
Scania K360IB4/Higer C53FT MH22 GZG/J (*Y4/5 APH*) have been acquired, ex-APH, Sharston.

Setra K415GT-HD W6 MOV has reverted to original registration BV10 ZJZ.

Mulleys, Ixworth, Suffolk
Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther C61F YX69 LCM has been acquired from Williams, Brecon.

National Express West Midlands MO
This operator's new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV seed vehicle is E334 (NX74 ZEB), which is to be evaluated at Perry Barr.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400MMC 6148 (SN15 LHV) is the latest recipient of Birmingham City Transport deep blue/cream heritage livery.

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Scania K230UB OmniLink 1847/65 (BV57 XHP, BX58 SYO), 1938 (BX10 ADO), Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 4509/10/9/26 (BU53 UMF/G/W, UNG).

Birmingham Busworks (dealer) has taken TransBus Trident/ALX400 4393 (BV52 OBT), 4548 (BL53 EEM), Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 4506-8/14/5 (BU53 UMC-E/L/M), 4647/54 (BX54 XRD, XKZ) and has sold Scania N230UD OmniCity double-deckers 4777-80 (BV57 XKY/Z, XLA, BU08 EHZ) to Connexions Buses, Tockwith. The Scanias were the only examples in the fleet still in passenger service.

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 4503 (BJ03 EXN), 4640 (BX54 DFY) and Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 4607 (BX54 DDV) for scrap.

Nefyn Coaches, Nefyn
Optare Solo M850 YN53 YHL has been withdrawn and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 RJ15 CCC (SK15 HBH) has been sold.

Newbury & District RB
New B34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 601-8 (ND74 BUS, YX74 ORV/W/Y/Z, OSA-C) were delivered between October 28 and November 6.

Newport Bus

MAN NL273F/Wright Meridian 102 (CN60 FBV) has been withdrawn, while Alexander Dennis Enviro200 301/2 (YX11 CRK/U) have been sold to The Big Lemon, Brighton.

New Punjab, Slough

Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt BU74 YSC was new in November.

Nexus Move, Stalybridge

Iveco Daily/Ilesbus minibuses RE72 HXV, HYZ, HZJ have been returned to their leasing company.

Notts & Derby WG

B33F-seated Optare Solo M950 477 (FJ09 MWC) has been transferred from Trent Barton, while Solo M920 1169 (MX04 VLM) and similar M880SL 1206 (YJ56 WVN) have come from TM Travel.

Optare Solo M970SR 510 (YJ65 EPF) has gone to TM Travel.

Tri-axle Volvo B7L/East Lancs Nordic 21 (SA52 DVZ) has passed to Stantons of Stoke, Cheadle.

Nova Bussing, Rye

C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 integral YK74 OZM was new in September.

Nu-Venture, Aylesford, Kent

Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart GX54 DXB has been acquired from Stagecoach South East.

Oare, Brynford, Holywell

BMC 1100FE DK56 SEO (*JNZ 2527, MNZ 8313, S666 DCS, JNZ 2527*) has been withdrawn.

Omega Busways, Higher Walton

Former Go North West Optare Solo YJ10 MFF has been re-registered Y22 HOW.

Disposals are of former Bus Vannin DAF DB250/East Lancs PM03 WHY (*F16 HOW, B6 CWR, LMN 268K, T10 MAN*) to Viscount Travel, Thornton le Dale, Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban MX05 CJY (*OM54 EGA, MX05 CJY*) to Red Rose Training, Kearsley and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 LK59 DZT to Stanley Travel, Oxhill. Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini GO51 CON (*LK04 HZX*) has gone for scrap.

Orion, Openshaw, Manchester

New are Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt ME64 OTC in Megabus base blue and OT74 BUS metallic grey fleet livery.

Acquired are former Ipswich Buses B29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 LX58 LMO (*09 D 3524*) via a preservationist, ex-Stagecoach East Scotland Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 SP06 EGV via Birmingham Busworks (dealer) and ex-RATP London Scania N230UD OmniCity double-deckers YT09 BNJ, YR10 FGP.

Former Stagecoach Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban SY07 CFA (*703 DYE, SY07 CFA*) has lost the remains of its Highland Omnibuses heritage livery for a heritage Mayne livery and has been re-registered H14 BUS.

Oxford Bus Company GA

Displaced from route 280 (Oxford-Thame) by electric buses, Wright StreetDecks 651-4 (SL15 ZGC-F) have been transferred to Thames Travel. They were repainted blue in June for the launch of the 280.

Londoner Buses Routemaster RM871 (WLT 871) has been given this patriotic livery to operate the T2 Christmas lights tour on which it was photographed in Regent Street on November 27. RICHARD GODFREY

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 613 (JG64 OXF) has been transferred to Carousel, but 610/2 (PK/GA18 OXF) remain in Oxford.

Mercedes-Benz Citaro 870 (LF57 OXF) has been withdrawn.

Grant Palmer, Flitwick

New in September was Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B46F 154 (BU74 YRR).

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 716-8 (BV10 WVZ, WWB/U) have been acquired ex-Stagecoach London and have been re-registered BU51/4 WAY, GP55 BUS respectively. They have also been rebuilt to single-door layout ex-H39/23D.

Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 706/7 (BU54/1 WAY) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 713 (GP55 BUS) reverted to original registrations LX06 DZU, EAW and SN08 BYC respectively and 713 went for scrap in July.

Pat's Coaches, Southsea, Wrexham

New Iveco Daily 70C21/Ilesbus i-City Max B31F PC74 PAT has replaced similar PD23 PAT.

Peoplesbus, Liverpool

TransBus Trident/ALX400 V10 BUS (*LV52 HHZ*), X10 BUS (*LV52 HHJ*) have been repainted into green and yellow fleet livery.

Pilkington, Accrington

B28F-seated Optare Solo M8500SR YJ68 FSE has been acquired, ex-Lloyd, Bagillt, via Stafford Bus Centre, Stone (dealer).

Dennis Trident/Alexander ALX400 LG02 FEO has passed to Reader, Burnley (dealer) for scrap.

Preston Bus RO

H45/29F-seated Wright StreetDeck 40846-8 (LX71 AOB-D) have been acquired from Ensignbus to replace Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 40627-9 (BJ15 TWF/G/K) which have been transferred to Diamond North West.

H45/29F-seated StreetDeck 40834 (MX21 AVG) has been transferred from Diamond North West, which lent Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 40630 (BJ11 DTY), recently acquired from Belle Vue, for a brief spell here.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban training vehicle 69157 (MX06 VNN) has gone to Diamond North West.

Prospect, Lye, West Midlands

New are C53Ft-seated Irizar i6 integral YT74 EFG and C63FLt-seated i6S PR74 ASK.

RATP Transit London RA

Ripley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Enviro200 DE20173/5 (YX11 GDF, FZB).

Reading Buses RB

H48/29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 City 249-51 (YY74 LVE-G) in Lion livery and 252-8 (YX74 ORG/H/J-L/N/O) in Jet Black livery were delivered between October 24 and November 13, with generic-liveried 259/60 and London Line-liveried 745/6 following later in November.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 647 (YY67 HBH) entered service on October 11.

H45/33F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 781/2 (SN66 WRC/D) were transferred from Thames Valley Buses in October for temporary use on London Line.

Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 805/6 (YN54 AEW/X) are being retained as heritage vehicles for special events and football services. As illustrated last month, 805 has been repainted in the original beige and charcoal Quality Travel for Reading livery with lettering to celebrate 20 years of route branding.

Sold to Chartwell, Horsham (dealer) are Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer training vehicles 312/3 (LG02 FFK, FGA) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 1203/5-7 (SN11 BWC/E/F, BMO), while The Bus Shop (dealer) has taken Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 382 (LO67 CFK).

Reays, Wigton, Cumbria

C53Ft-seated Bova Futura FHD127-365 RY10 ERN has been acquired, ex-Anita, Stansted Airport and repainted white.

Volvo B8R/Sunsundegui SB3 BV19 LTK, LME/F have passed to Premier, Luton. Similar BN68 XRE has also left the fleet.

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Redline, Penwortham
Further to October Fleet News, new Neoplan Tourliner 6 RED was originally registered OU24 ZTR.

Acquired are Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B43F MX55 HHN ex-Harpur, Derby and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 SN11 BWC ex-Newbury & District.

Volvo B9R/Plaxton Leopard YM59 SWO (*16 RED*) has passed to Amvale, Grimsby, Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown T542 AUA (*YIL 9116, T542 AUA*) to Anderson, Langholm and Volvo B7TL/TransBus ALX400 LJ53 BDE (*YIL 6983, LJ53 BDE*) to Ripley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap. Volvo B12M/Plaxton Panther FP02 YDM (*YIL 6987, FP02 YDM*) has also been sold.

Richmond, Barley, Herts
Not reported until now, Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B38F BV24 LNX was new last March.

Ross Travel, Featherstone
Scania K360CB4/Irizar i6S 1968 RT and RT74 RTG are new.

Rosso TD
Optare Solo M950 188/9 (YJ58 PGK, YJ09 MJO) have passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Sentinel Parking, Leeds
New during 2024 were B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX24 OZN in June and Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B32D BK24 CXL in August.

Skills, Nottingham
The third new Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 in April, for Leger Silver Service tours, was C40F-seated BF24 AKV. New in September were C53FLt-seated Temsa HD12 integral YJ74 BZD and C34Ft-seated Yutong TC9 midicoaches YK74 PFJ/V.

Yutong TC9 YJ15 HLM (*MCT 612, YJ15 HLM*) has passed to Kevin's Coaches, Wishaw, while Irisbus EuroRider/Beulas YN07 ECD went to Ripley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

South East Coaches, Wickford, Essex
New in September were C55FLt-seated Irizar i6S integrals YT74 EFW/X.

Southgate & Finchley, Friern Barnet
C37F-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach YK74 OZJ was new in September.

South Wales Transport, Swansea
Five 13-registered Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther coaches acquired ex-Ministry of Defence via CVA Auctions are being re-registered M100, V100, X200, 300, 400 SWT.

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo acquired are C53Ft-seated BV19 YLR from Henshaw, Moreton-in-Marsh, C49Ft-seated RL16 RSL (*L33 BWT, RL16 RSL*) from Beewise, Leeds and re-registered V500 SWT, and C49FLt-seated BF67 WJN from Lucketts Group but in Clarkes of London livery.

Buses acquired are B29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC L8, 9 XEL (*CN11 FBC/D, L8, 9 XEL*) from Central Connect.

Coaches that have reverted to their original registrations are Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther M100 SWT (*YN13 GXB*), Irizar i6 V100 SWT (*YN64 LYC*), V200 SWT (*YN15 YTL*) and Mercedes-Benz Tourismo X300, 400 SWT (*BU14 SZO/P*), of which YN13 GXB, BU14 SZO/P passed to Proctor, Leeming Bar (dealer) along with Volvo B11R/Jonckheere JHV NJ15 DSJ (*X200 SWT, NJ15 DSJ*). BU14 SZO has moved on to Millennium Travel, Mansfield and YN15 YTL to Silver Fox, Renfrew.

Grant Palmer 717 (BU54 WAY), one of three Wright Eclipse Gemini 2-bodied Volvo B9TLs that the Bedfordshire independent has purchased for operation on the Luton-Dunstable guided busway. They were new to First London, later with Tower Transit and latterly with Stagecoach London. RICHARD GODFREY

Loaned Newport Bus MAN NL273/Wright Meridian CN60 FBY has left the fleet. Optare Solo M7900SE YJ66 AOU has been sold via Mistral, Knutsford(dealer).

Specialist Passenger Solutions FG
A fuel-cell powered Wright StreetDeck Hydroliner for the Sizewell C contract in Suffolk, 39726 (BG74 DLD), has been on test in Northern Ireland.

Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire ST
The first new buses for Barrow depot for many years are Optare Solo M8570SL 48195-200 (YJ74 CZA-F). Similar 48201 (YJ74 CZG) is at Morecambe.

MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 22596 (PX08 CSY), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27743/4 (PX11 DMY/Z) and Optare Solo 47147 (PX54 EPJ), 47729 (PX10 DZH) have received Christmas vinyls and are allocated to Morecambe, Lillyhall, Carlisle, Barrow and Kendal respectively.

Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 18375 (MX55 KRE), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27531 (SP57 DFD), Optare Solo 47392 (SP56 CXE) and 47617 (PX08 FMU). Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart training vehicle 34717 (PX05 EKL) has also been sold.

Stagecoach East ST
Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27642-4/6 (GX10 HBU/Y/Z, HCC) have returned from loan to Stagecoach North East.

Stagecoach East Midlands ST
Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 18449 (VU06 KFN), 18507/9 (SP06 EGU/X) have been transferred from Stagecoach East Scotland.

Mansfield-based Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36525 (FX12 BZC) has received Christmas vinyls.

MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 22635 (YN08 JFY) has been withdrawn, while Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 12032/50 (MX10 MVW, MX60 BVS) and the remains of fire damaged Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19380 (NK58 AEU) have gone for scrap.

Sizewell C
Our journey to Net Zero. Powered by Hydrogen.
39726
Specialist Passenger Solutions 39726, a hydrogen-powered Wright StreetDeck Hydroliner destined for the Sizewell C nuclear power station construction project in Suffolk, on test at Translink's Milewater service centre in Belfast. PAUL SAVAGE

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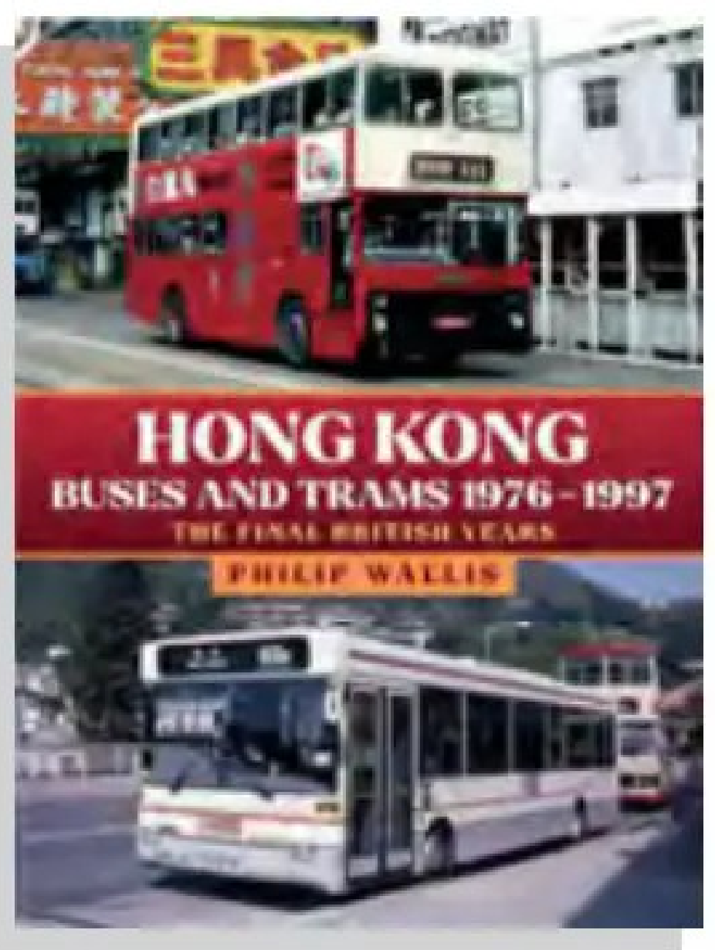
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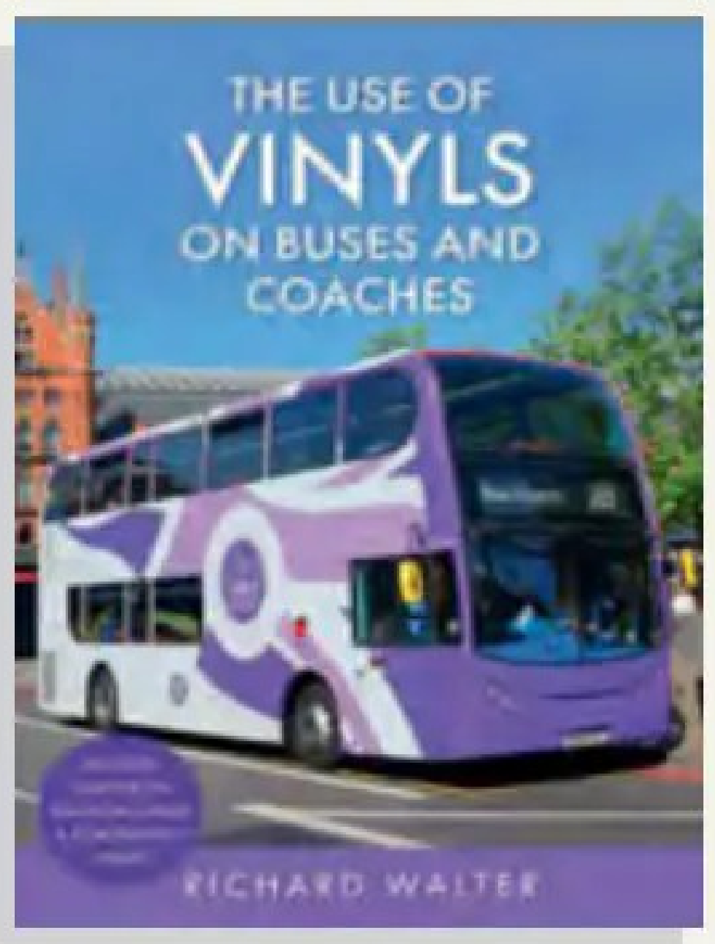
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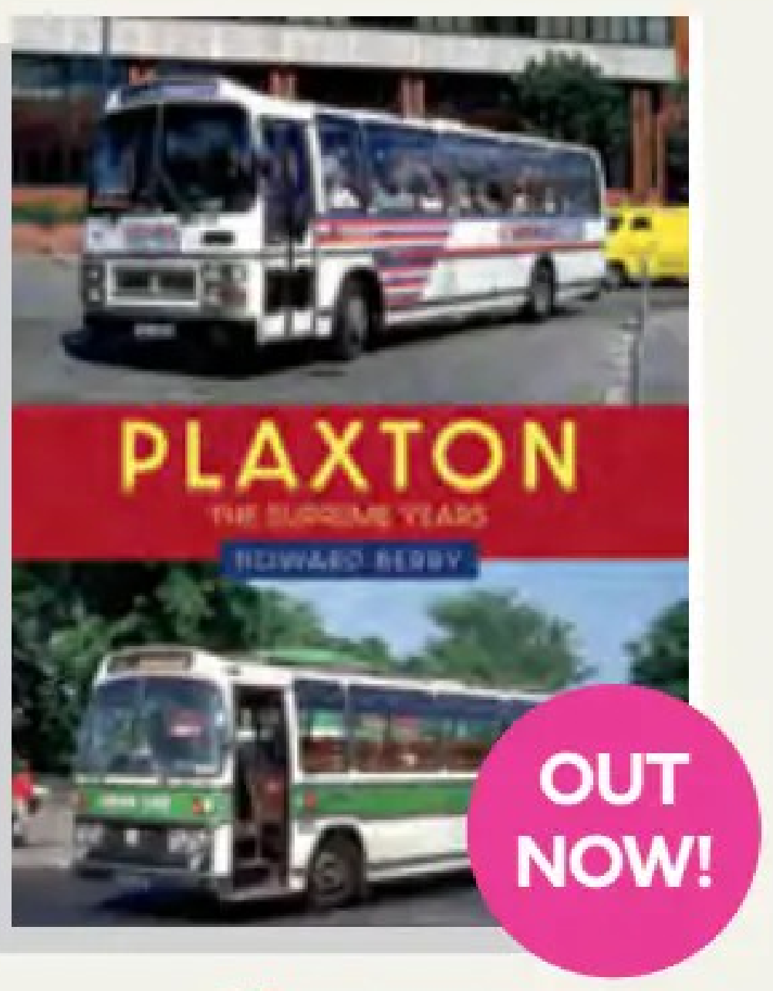
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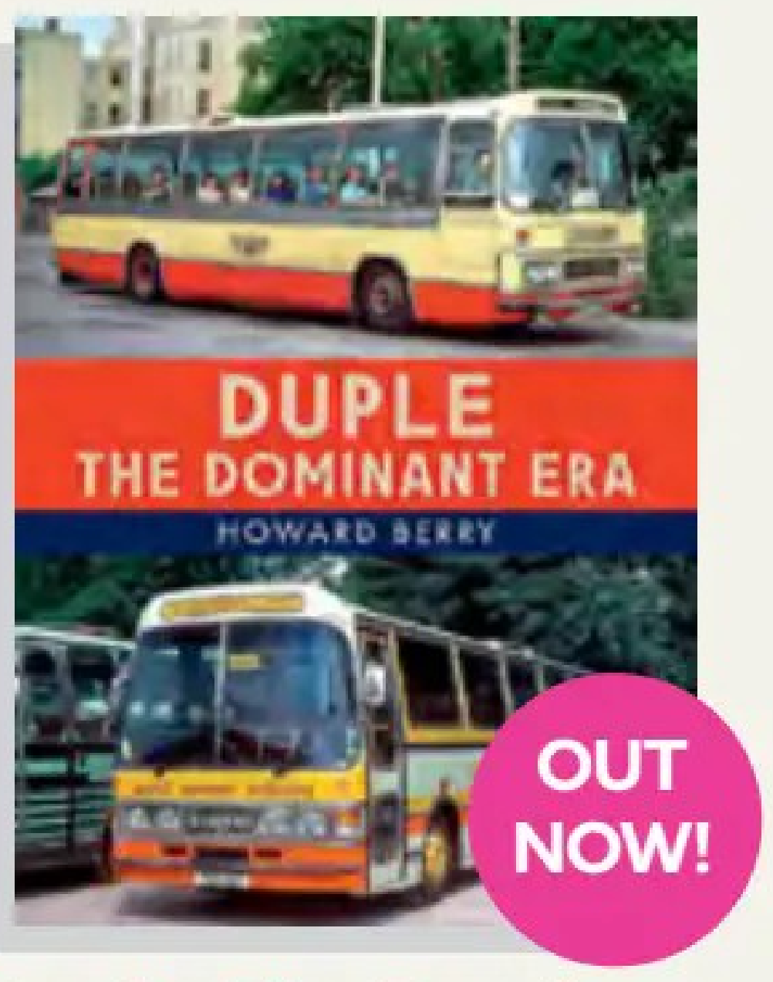
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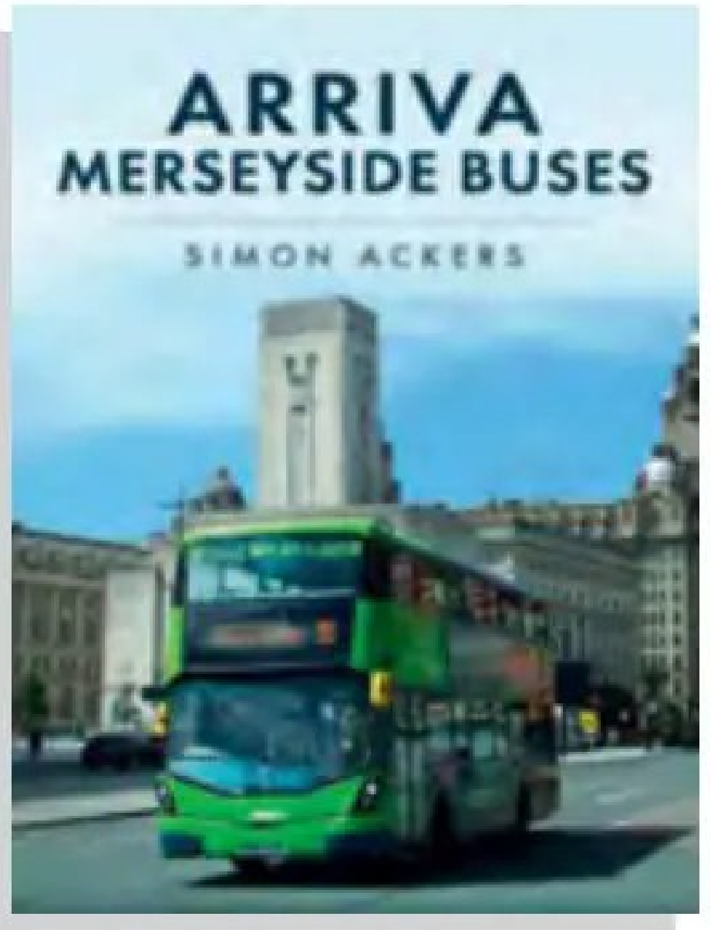
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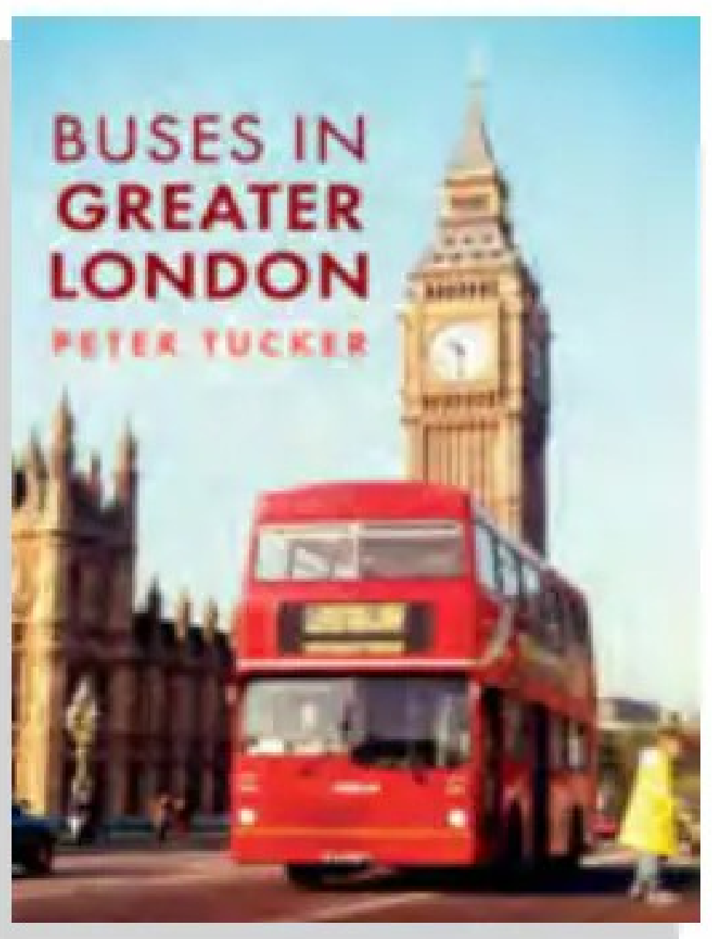
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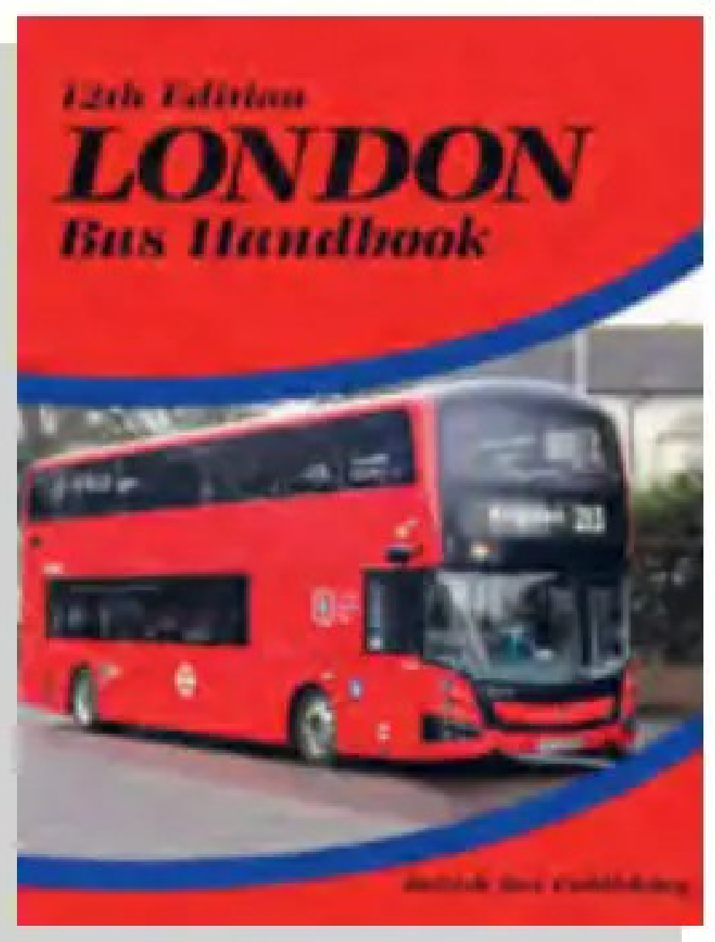
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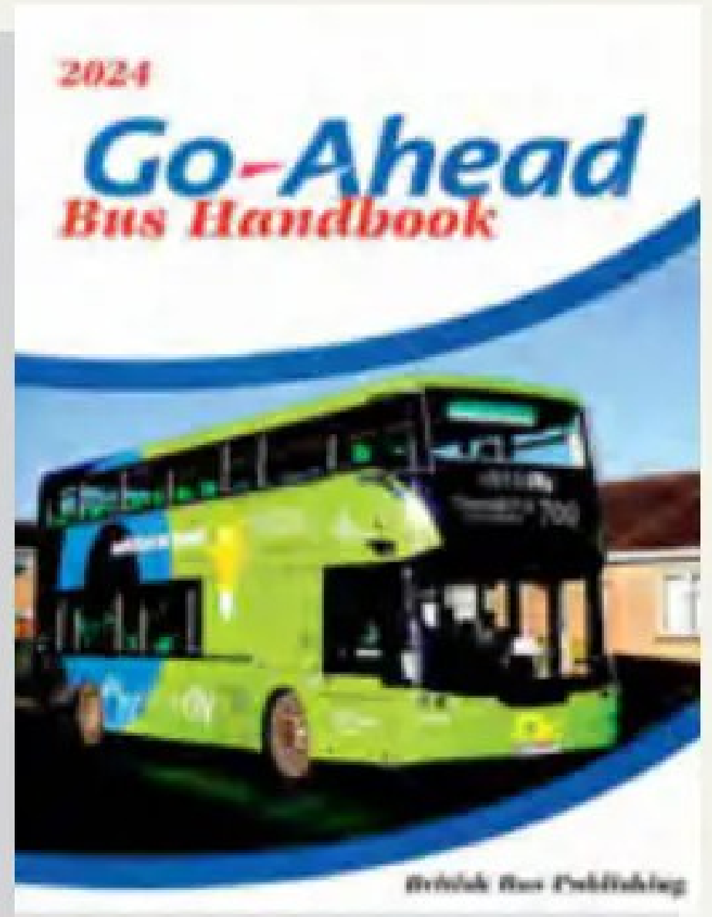
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Stagecoach Manchester is introducing new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EVs to its Bee Network services in Oldham. This is 80089 (SK74 BHE) in Oldham bus station. RUSSELL YOUNG

Stagecoach London ST

On order for route 247 (Romford-Barkingside) are Wright StreetDeck Electroliner double-deckers 82083-95.

The new generation 10.5m Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV double-deckers for Superloop route SL3 at Bromley will be 80401-17 (SK74 APU/V/X-Z, ARF/O/U/X/Z, ASO/U/V/X/Z, ATF/N).

B21F-seated Switch Metrocity MC870EV YJ74 DGF, in London livery, is on long-term loan from the manufacturer, based at Walthamstow.

In a further change of plan, H42/20D-seated Volvo BZL 86200 has been registered LJ74 XPA instead of LJ24 ZRX.

H40/20D-seated 10.6m Wright StreetDeck Electroliner 82050/2/3/5/9/61/4 (LV24 EUX/Z, EVB/D/J/L/P) and MCV H40/20D-bodied Volvo BZL 86209 (LJ24 ZPE) entered service in November.

Withdrawn are Optare Solos 47809 (YJ59 NRN), 47915/6/9/83/5/7/8 (YJ10 EYF/G/L, YJ60 PFA/E/G/K), with 47919 sold to Ripley, Carlton (dealer), which has also taken Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36551 (LX12 DKD) for scrap.

Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken Scania N230UD OmniCity double-decker 15001 (LX58 CDV) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 16968/78-81/3/4 (BV10 WVY, WWE/E/G/H/J/L/M), while North West Bus Sales (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36551 (LX12 DKD).

Ensign has sold Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 16969/70/88 (BV10 WVZ, WWB/U) to Grant Palmer, Flitwick. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19796/7 (LX11 BHP/U) have passed to Bay Travel, Lochgelly.

Stagecoach Manchester ST

New for Oldham depot Bee Network Tranche 2 operations are new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV 80087-110 (SK74 BHA/D-F/J/L/N-P/U/V-Z, BJE/F/J/O/U/V/X-Z). They started to enter service in mid-November.

Supplementing last month's report, delivery of yellow Bee Network-liveried Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 11881–930 (YX74 OLA-C/E/G/H/J/K/M-P/R/T-W, OMA-H/J-M/O/P/R/T-W/Y/Z, ONB-D/F-H/J-O) is well under way. Examples arrived at Stockport depot for vehicle familiarisation in November, although the first depots to run them were Oldham and Middleton, by the second half of November.

Internal fleet transfers ahead of Tranche 3 franchising have seen Stockport depot regain Alexander Dennis Enviro400H hybrids, replacing older diesel buses. Stockport-based vehicles started to receive Bee Network vinyls on their Stagecoach livery at the end of November.

Bee Network livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10849 (SN17 MJK), Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 13170 (BN61 MWU) and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27943/52/3 (SN13 CKO, CLU/V), while Stagecoach local livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 12202 (MX62 GUO), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19235 (MX08 GKV) and 19452 (MX58 VAJ); 12202 previously carried Magic Bus livery.

Transferred to Metroline Manchester in November were Scania N230UD OmniCity double-deckers 15381-3 (YT09 BJV, ZCA/K) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 16806/7 (MX58 DWA/C).

Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire ST

New at Preston are B35F-seated Yutong E10 electrics 63126/7 (YK74 PHY/Z) for a BAE Systems staff shuttle contract between Warton and Salmesbury. They have displaced ex-Peoplesbus Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37328/9 (PL67 KMF, X80 BUS, W17 CPT; SC67 ZGZ, X60 BUS, G6 WHW) to Chester.

Also new are Chester-based Optare Solo M8570SL 48192-4 (YJ74 CXH/K/L), which were diverted from Stagecoach South Wales.

Local livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10814/84 (SM66 VBV, YX67 VCU), 11111 (SK68 LWE), MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 22785 (CN09 AAV) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36103 (MX59 JCJ); 10814 previously carried a Eurovision overall wrap, while 10884 was a Gold bus.

Optare Solo 47337 (PX06 FYH) has been sold.

Stagecoach Midlands ST

Thirty-one new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV double-deckers for Leamington Spa are 80056-86 (SK74 BEJ/O/U/Y, BFA/E/F/J/L-P, AOF-H/J/L-P/R-Z).

Transferred in from Stagecoach North Scotland are Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27917 (SN63 VUS), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36583 (YX63 LGD) and 37260 (SL64 HWT.

Yellow distance livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26210 (SN67 XDC).

Stagecoach North East ST

New Yutong E12 electric single-deckers 73057-76 (NL74 FTV/X/Y, FUU/V/W/Y, FVA-H/J/K/M-O) have been delivered into store at Stockton. They carry local livery and will be allocated to Sunderland.

Transferred in from Stagecoach West Scotland are Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27615 (SF59 FYU), 27715/7/8/71/2 (PO11 BCK/V/X, PO61 NTG, PO12 GXU); 27615 is allocated to Stockton; the others to Sunderland. Similar 27642-4/6 (GX10 HBU/Y/Z, HCC) have been returned to Stagecoach East.

TransBus Pointer Dart 34605 (NK04 NPF) has been withdrawn, while MAN 18.220/Alexander Dennis ALX300 training vehicles 22065/74 (NK54 BFM, BGE) and former London Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36293 (LX11 AXM) have gone for scrap.

Stagecoach South ST

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10431/2 (SK15 HCN/O), 10685 (SN66 WHD), 11243 (SN69 ZFA) have transferred in from Stagecoach West.

Worthing-based Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27660 (GX10 KZN) has received Christmas vinyls.

Stagecoach South East ST

B38F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37497-500 (YX19 OSE-G/J) have been transferred from Stagecoach West Scotland; 37498-500 have received two-tone blue and grey Fastrack livery for route D (Dover-Whitfield).

Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart 34651 (GX54 DXB) has passed to Nu Venture, Aylesford, while similar 34660 (GX54 FVV) has been donated to charity.

Stagecoach South Wales ST

Optare Solo M8570SL 48185-91 (YJ74 CXA-G) are new, allocated to Cwmbran with Keeping South Wales Connected branding.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27700 (CN60 CVU) is being converted to a training vehicle.

Stagecoach South West ST

Two more new Optare Solo M8570SL are 48183/4 (YJ74 DBY/Z). Expanding on last month's report, 48162-71/5/6 are allocated to Barnstaple, 48177-84 to Exeter.

Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite 54305-8/19 (YX64 WCJ-M, YY65 VXU) have been transferred to Stagecoach Yorkshire.

Stagecoach West ST

Volvo B11RLE/Plaxton Panorama 50445 (YX21 NNG) has lost Scottish Citylink blue and yellow for Oxford Tube livery.

Gloucester-based Scania N250UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15366 (YT21 DVW) was named *Graham McEvoy* in October in memory of a former driver.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10431/2 (SK15 HCN/O), 10685 (SN66 WHD) and

11243 (SN69 ZFA) have been transferred to Stagecoach South, while similar 10671-84 (SN16 OYT-Z, OZA/B/J-M, WHC) have gone to Stagecoach East Scotland.

Placed in reserve are Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 18314 (KX05 TWM), Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart 35114 (YN06 WCR, Optare Solo M880 47471, 47688 (PX07 GZV, GN58 PXR) and Optare Solo M880SL 47735 (OU10 GFE).

Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 18450 (VU06 KFO) has been withdrawn.

Stagecoach Yorkshire ST

Optare Solo M925 SR 47958 (YJ15 AEL) and similar M990SL 48036 (YJ66 ASZ) have been transferred from Stagecoach East Scotland and are allocated to Chesterfield. Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite 54305-8/19 (YX64 WCJ-M, YY65 VXU) have come from Stagecoach South West for rail replacement work.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37453 (YX67 VGP) has been decorated as this year's Christmas bus, spending a week at each of the five depots. It was previously Barnsley Townlines branded.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 training vehicle 36354 (LX59 AOE) has received training livery.

Stainton, Kendal

C57Flt-seated Temsa HD13 integral KT74 BUS was new in October.

Stanley Travel, Oxhill, Co. Durham

Optare Solo M8900SR YJ64 DWC has been acquired from Belle Bue, Heaton Chapel and re-registered R7 STX.

Stantons of Stoke, Cheadle

Tri-axle Volvo B7L/East Lancs Nordic H55/40F SA52 DVZ has been acquired ex-Notts & Derby.

Tally Ho, Kingsbridge, Devon

Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt BU74 YRT was new in October.

Tanat Valley, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC SN69 ZLE/K/O have been supplied by Mistral, Knutsford (dealer). They were last with TM Travel.

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 502 (BN61 MXE) remains in use here.

Team Pennine TD

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata B27F 69 (WP21 FHB) has been transferred from The Keighley Bus Company.

Optare Solo M880SL 173 (YJ59 GHD) and similar M950 181 (YK08 ERX) have passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Thames Travel GA

Wright StreetDecks 651-4 (SL15 ZGC-F) have been transferred from Oxford Bus Company, while StreetDeck 682 (SK17 HHM) has lost yellow Oxford route 15 livery for two-tone red and 690/1 (SK17 HHV/W) have lost orange Oxford route 8 livery for Milton Park purple/metallic blue.

Further Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 transferred to Carousel are 227/40 (SF/VF10 OXF).

Withdrawn are Scania OmniDekka/East Lancs 246-8 (YN55 NFH/A/G) and Scania OmniCity double-decker 913 (OU08 HGN) is also believed to be withdrawn, as it has not been used since February 2024.

Thirty-one Alexander Dennis Enviro400EVs in local livery are going into service with Stagecoach Midlands at Leamington Spa as part of the electrification of bus services in Coventry. These include 80076 (SK74 AOO) at the University of Warwick. MARK LYONS

Thames Valley Buses RB

As expected, new Flightline-liveried Alexander Dennis Enviro400 City 742-4 (FL74 LHR, SLH, ASC) entered service on October 24/25.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 781/2 (SN66 WRC/D) were transferred to Reading Buses in October.

Following the end of the Chineham Park shuttle contract, Volvo B8RLE/Wright Eclipse 3 458 (BU16 UYD) was withdrawn on October 18 and awaits disposal.

Thandi Executive, Smethwick

New are Mercedes-Benz Tourismos TT74 NDY, NOY and Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt JA74 NDY.

TM Travel WG

Several ex-Stagecoach London (new to CT Plus) Optare Solos have been acquired from Ripley, Carlton (dealer). The first to enter service was 1156 (YJ60 PFK), still in London red.

Loaned Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 272-4 (SN69 ZLE/K/O) have been returned to Mistral, Knutsford (dealer) and have moved on to Tanat Valley, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

Also here, transferred from Notts & Derby, is B35F-seated Optare Solo M970SR 510 (YJ65 EPF).

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 272 (SN69 ZLE) has been transferred to Kinchbus, while Optare Solo M920 1169 (MX04 VLM) and similar M880SL 1206 (YJ56 WVN) have gone to Notts & Derby.

Withdrawn are Scania L94UB/Wright Solar 653 (FN04 HSZ) and Optare Solo M920 1205 (YN04 XZC). Sold for scrap are Scania L94UB/Wright Solar 670/80 (FJ55 AAE, ABF), Optare Solo 1190 (YN07 SYS) and Scania OmniCity 1210 (YN56 NRZ).

Town Lynx, Greenfield

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 LK07 BEY has received lime green fleet livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX17 NZB has passed to Falcon, Byfleet, via Chartwell, Horsham (dealer).

Transdev Airport Services TD

New at Heathrow are Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B20F 602-9 (LJ74 XOG/H/K-P).

The first of several ex-Stagecoach London Optare Solos acquired by TM Travel, 1156 (YJ60 PFK), in service in Sheffield. ALEX CLOUGH

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Transport UK London
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 8837 (YY64 YJU) has gone for scrap.

The Travellers Choice, Carnforth
New here is Mercedes-Benz 517CDi/EVM C19F GX74 BBU.

Lonsdale Buses Wright StreetLite WF 102/3 (RX61 HTJ, HIL 2091, RX61 HTJ; RX61 OEE, HIL 5347, RX61 OEE) have been sold, 102 passing to Acorn, Deri. Volvo B7RLE/MCV Evolution BT63 UUV has passed to Bland, Essendine.

Trent Barton WG
B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 277 (YX23 OTA) is on loan from Mistral, Knutsford (dealer) to provide warranty cover for resident vehicles of the same type. It is white with "Sorry for my appearance, I'm helping out" lettering.

Optare Solo M950 477 (FJ09 MWC) has been transferred to Notts & Derby.

Optare Versa 804 (YJ11 ENH) has been withdrawn.

Vision Bus, Blackrod, Bolton
B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX74 OFR/S are new, in fleet livery, which has also been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC SN67 XBH, YX20 OCE, YX21 RNU, RPU, RRV, YX71 OJJ, YX23 OSS/W/Y and former Blackpool Transport Alexander Dennis Enviro400 City SN16 OVF/J.

Voel, Dyserth
Neoplan N2216/3SHDC Tourliner OY67 DXO has been re-registered 6499 VC and received orange/yellow fleet livery with lettering to celebrate Voel's 75th anniversary.

Irisbus EuroRider 397E/Plaxton Paragon C70F YN06 OPH (*555 JXR, YN06 OPH, 76 RT, YN06 OPH*) has passed to Williams, Bala.

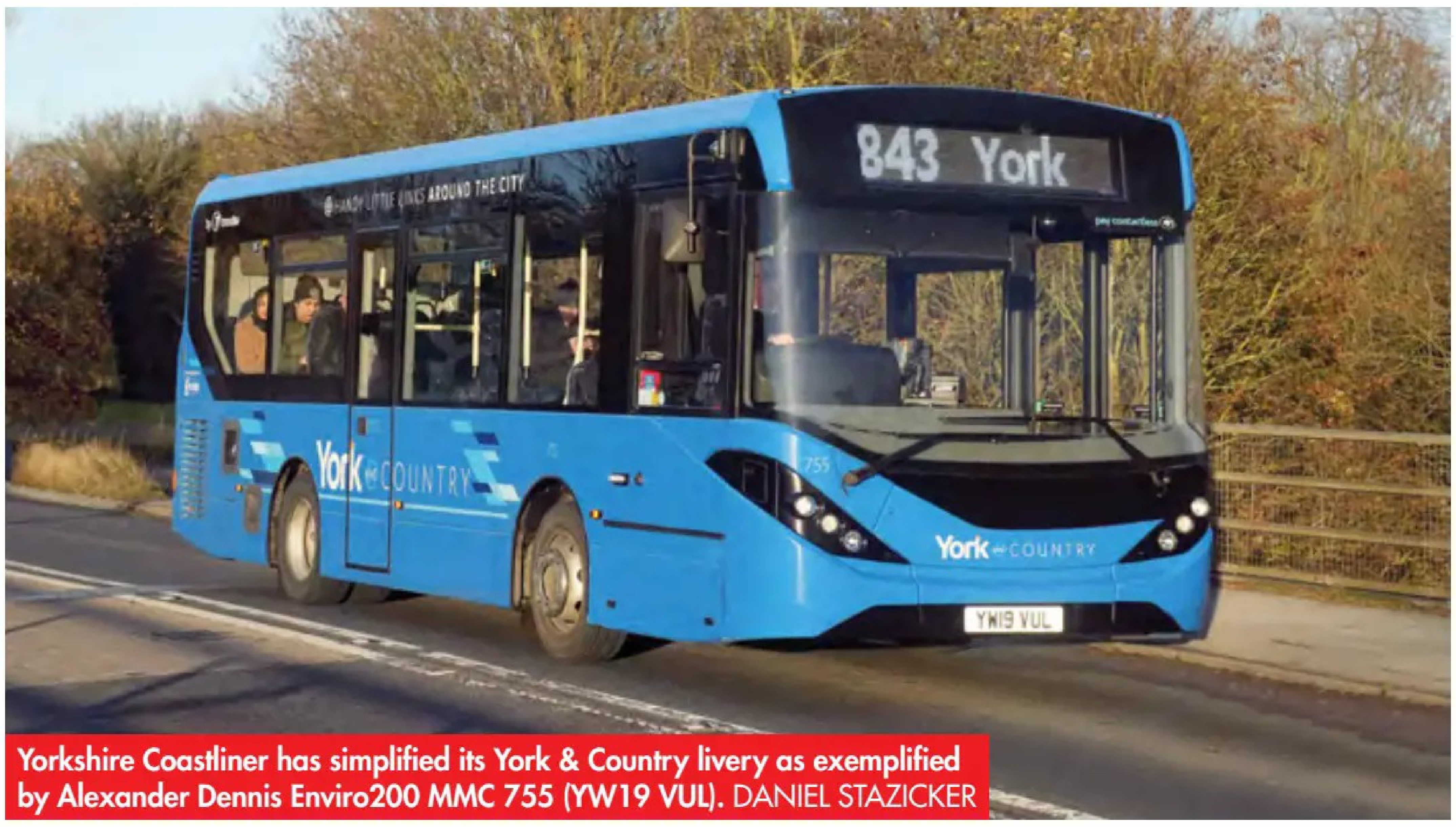
Walton, Freckleton
C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 YK74 OZG was new in September.

Warrington's Own Buses
Further new MCV-bodied Volvo BZLs are H42/19F-seated 2013/7/21/2/4/5/8/30/1/3 (BU74 YTN, BJ74 XNW, BU74 YTT, BJ74 XNV/X/Y, BU74 YVE, BJ74 XOB/C/L) and B26F-seated 9001 (BJ74 XNU).

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 201-8 (CH04/06/12/56-9/62 CAT) have been re-registered MH18 XLA-G/J and 206 has been sold to Ensign, Purfleet (dealer).

Also withdrawn are VDL DB250/Wright Pulsar Gemini 186/94 (LJ04 LEF, *CSZ 7913, LJ04 LEF*; LJ04 LGF), 300/1 (LJ04 LFG, LGC), Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 188/9/91 (BD51 YCR/S, LX53 AZW), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 222 (YY67 USH), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 313 (LK58 KHU) and Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking 319 (PG04 WGY).

Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken 188/91, 222, 301/13 along with Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 198 (LK04 HXU), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 242 (GX58 GLZ) and Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking 318 (PG04 WGP). PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken VDL DB250/Wright Pulsar Gemini 195 (LJ04 LGG),



Yorkshire Coastliner has simplified its York & Country livery as exemplified by Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 755 (YW19 VUL). DANIEL STAZICKER

Ensign has sold Alexander Dennis Enviro200 231 (YX10 BFO) to Flagfinders, Braintree.

Weavaway Travel, Newbury
Scania K450CB6/Irizar i6 IRZ 949 was new in September.

Westway, West Molesey, Surrey
H72F-seated Yutong U11DD YK74 PEO has been re-registered WS74 WAY.

Wheelers Travel, North Baddesley, Hants
New are H51/34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC MO74 WTL, Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt OK24 WTL and UP74 WTL.

White Bus, Winkfield, Berks
Correcting November Fleet News, Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B38F 88/9 are numbered BU74 YP**W**/X.

Woods Coaches MO
Scania K410EB6/Caetano Levante III C55FLt 439/40/2/3 (BF68 LCE/J/M/N) have come from Galloway, Mendlesham, to whom Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante III BV73 ZXK has gone.

Yelloway, Chadderton, Oldham
C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 YK74 OZL is new and was quickly re-registered A15 YEL.

York Pullman FG
EVM M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi 54153 (WUI 8490) has been transferred from First Leicester.

Withdrawn Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 413CDi/Crest 54121 (YWH 693) has reverted to original registration YY52 KRZ.

Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 36405 (RXI 3338, *LF52 ZPN*) has been withdrawn.

Yorkshire Coastliner TD
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 61-3 (WP21 FGM-O) have been transferred from The Burnley Bus Company.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 752/4/5 (YW19 VUH/K/L) has been repainted into a revised version of York & Country two-tone blue livery, with lighter blue on the front wedge and without the thin horizontal orange stripe.

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 2428 (BF62 UXY) has been transferred to The Harrogate Bus Company.

Optare Versa 274/8 (Y4, 18 TDV; YJ67 PZA, YJ68 FEC) and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 2421 (BD11 CEA) have been reinstated.

ISLE OF MAN

Bus Vannin
Five Wright StreetDeck Ultroliner double-deckers have been ordered with the new option of a 6.7litre Cummins B-series six-cylinder engine matched to a Voith DIWA.8 NXT seven-speed automatic gearbox. They are the first of the new variant to be ordered and are Bus Vannin's first buses ordered since 2020 when, along with Mercedes-Benz Citaro single-deckers and Sprinter minibuses, ten StreetDecks with six-cylinder Mercedes-Benz OM936 engines were delivered.

Pictures in last month's Fleet News
A glitch last month caused several of the pictures in Fleet News England & Wales to be credited to the wrong photographers. The correct details are: p71 (Blackpool) by Terry Blackman, top p72 (Brighton & Hove) and p73 (Compass Bus) by Richard Godfrey, p74 (First) by David J Smith, p76 n(Hulleys) by Paul Wigan, p77 (Reading) by Mark Lyons.

Acknowledgements

Particular thanks are due, this month, to the following for your most welcome contributions to Fleet News by letter and by e-mail:

Stephen Barton, Philip Battersby, Bus Lists on the Web, Cambridge Omnibus Society, Cambus, Andrew Churchill, Chris Clegg, Crosville Enthusiasts Club, Paul Davies, David Donati, Eastern Transport Collection, David Ellis, Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group, Essex Bus News, Fylde Tramway Society, Richard Godfrey, Joe Gornall, Greater Manchester Transport Society, Adrian Healey, Ivor Homfray, Ron Hughes, Invicta, The Journal, Edward Joynes, London Omnibus Traction Society, London's Transport Bus News, Chris Lowe, Mark Lyons, M&D and East Kent Bus Club, M&T News, Merseyside Bus Club, Metroline, Ian Moorcroft, Simon Nicholas, Northern Group Enthusiasts Club, Deric Pemberton, PSV Circle, Reading Buses, Ribble Enthusiasts Club, Dave Robinson, Dave Russell, James Sadd, Phil Shafe, Sheffield Omnibus Enthusiasts Society, Southdown Enthusiasts Club, Chris Staley, Jeff Tattersall, Nick Thomson, Steve Thompson, Transpire - The Chesterfield Bus Society, United Enthusiasts Club, Jeff Watson, Welsh Bus News, Wessex bi-monthly Transport Review, Wessex Transport Society, West Yorkshire Metro Transport News, Wheels, Richard Whewell, Paul Wigan, Charlie Williams, Yorkshire Bus News.

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FLEET IN FOCUS

ORION TRAVEL COACHES

JOHN G. LIDSTONE With additional material compiled by LAWRIE BOWLES and JOHN YOUNG

Based: Head office and depot – Kay Street, Openshaw, Manchester. Sub-depot at Weaver Vale Industrial Estate, Frodsham, Cheshire.

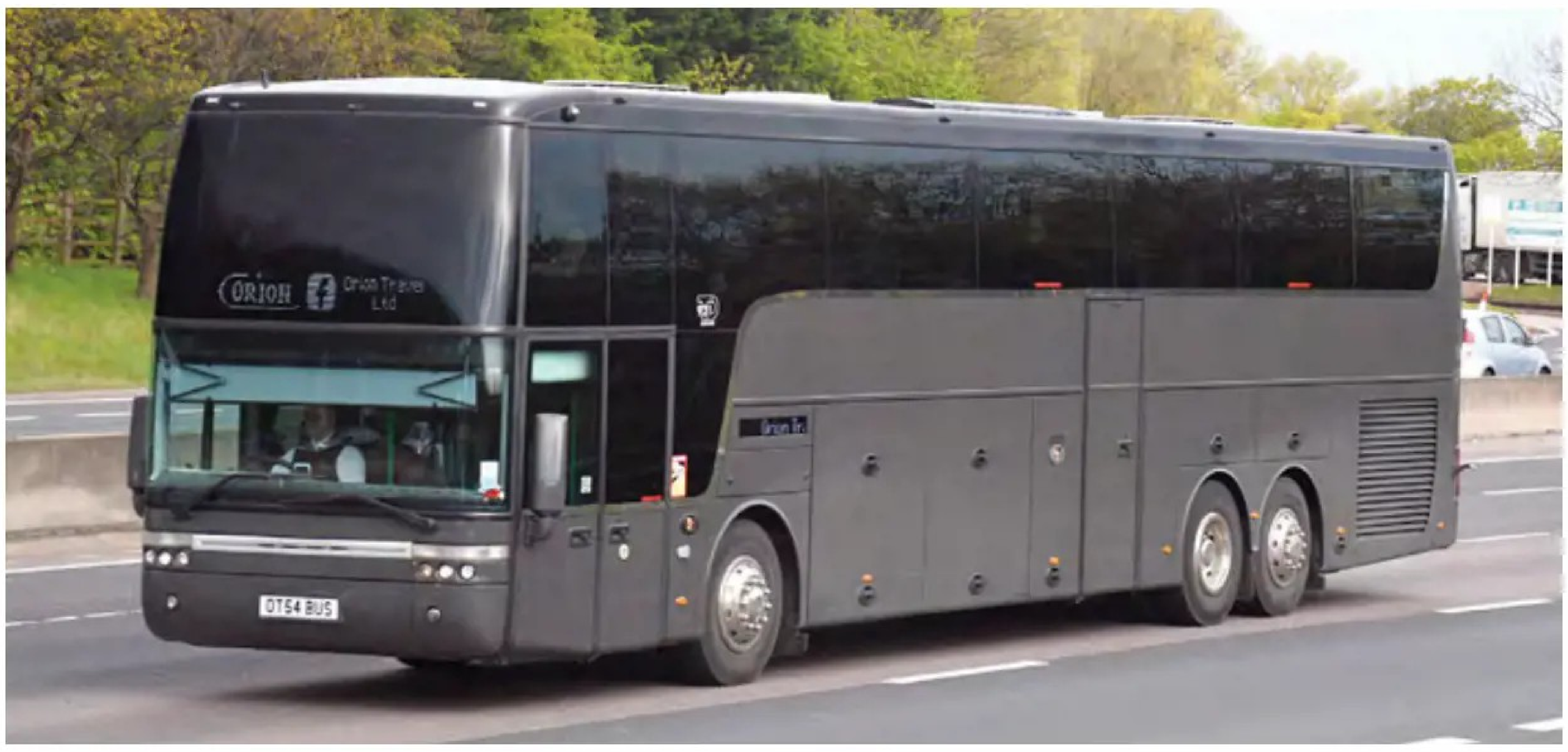
Website: www.oriontravel.co.uk

Founded: 1994 by taxi hirer Gerard Queenan with a new Volkswagen Caravelle minibus, registered N954 ANA, followed by a Caetano Optimo C16F-bodied Toyota Coaster. Along the way, sister company Manchester Breakdown Services was acquired, but does not operate as Orion Travel.

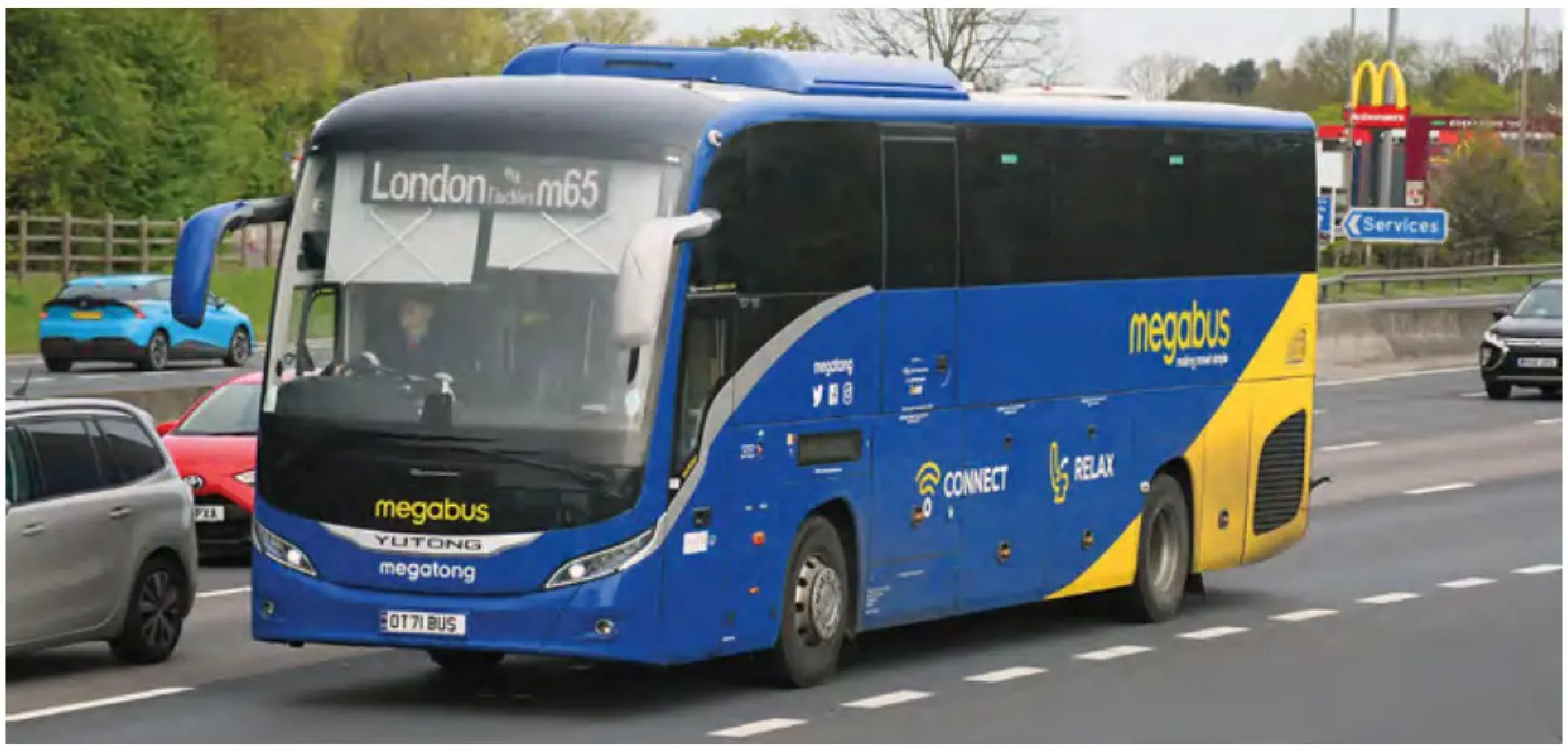
The firm was incorporated in 2009. Operations director Leigh Mitchell joined the board in 2019. Although three full-size coaches were operated by 2008, fleet expansion began in 2016. The first new full-sized coach, Yutong GT12 OT71 BUS, was delivered in 2021 and operated in Megabus blue livery with name *Megatong*. More new vehicles were purchased in 2024.

Agreement to take over Go-Goodwins' last ten Mayne contracts was concluded in 2024 to start in January 2025. The base at Kammac Transport in Dallam Lane, Warrington may be taken over.

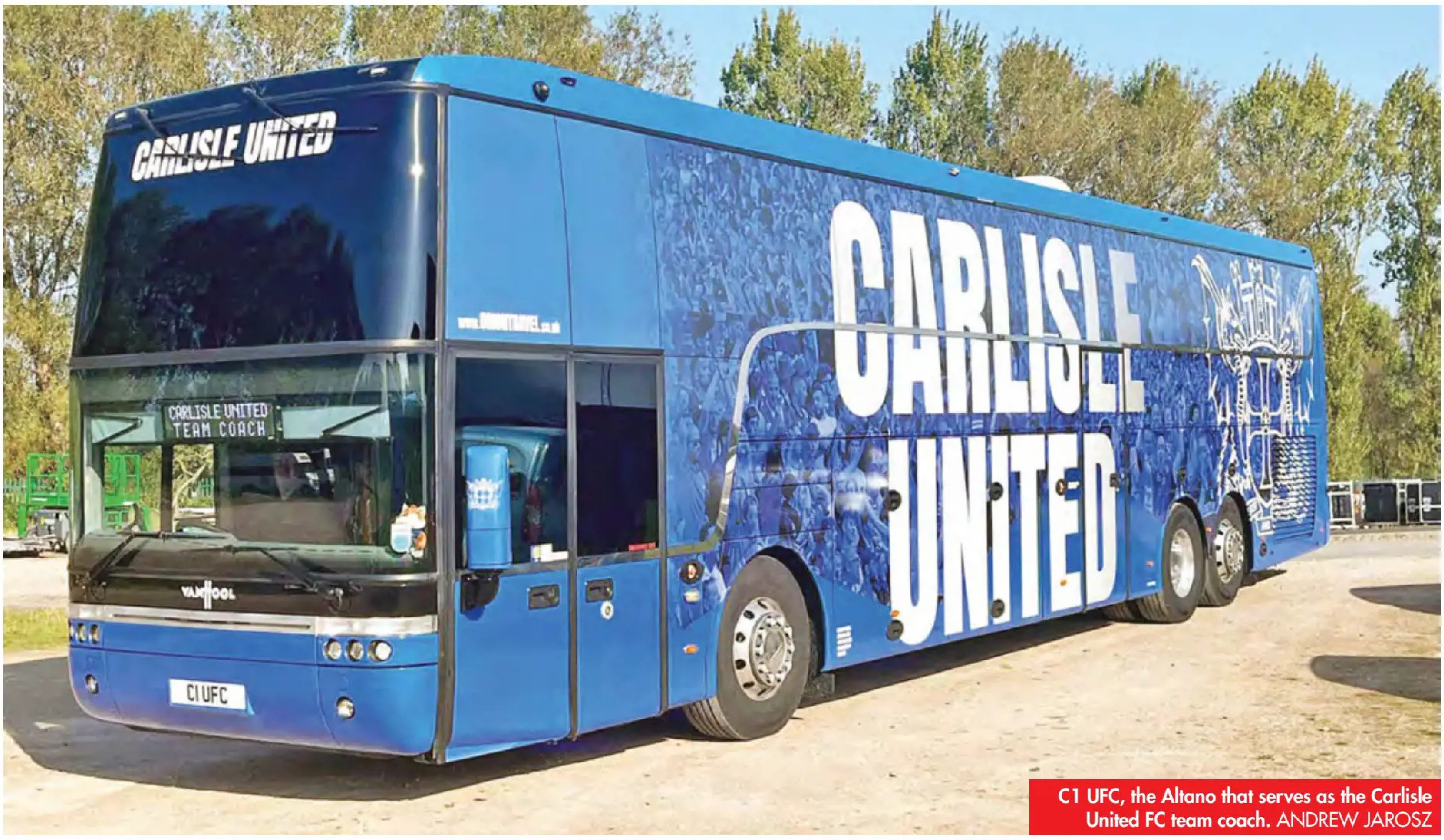
Where does it operate?: North-west England mainly but nationwide on football and rugby charters, and on rail replacement work. British and continental private hire and private tours, three school bus contracts. Team coaches for Carlisle United, Accrington Stanley, Chorley, Marine, Fylde, Warrington Town, Hyde United, Curzon Ashton and Witton Albion football clubs, Lymm, Thatto Heath Crusaders and Oldham Rugby League clubs.



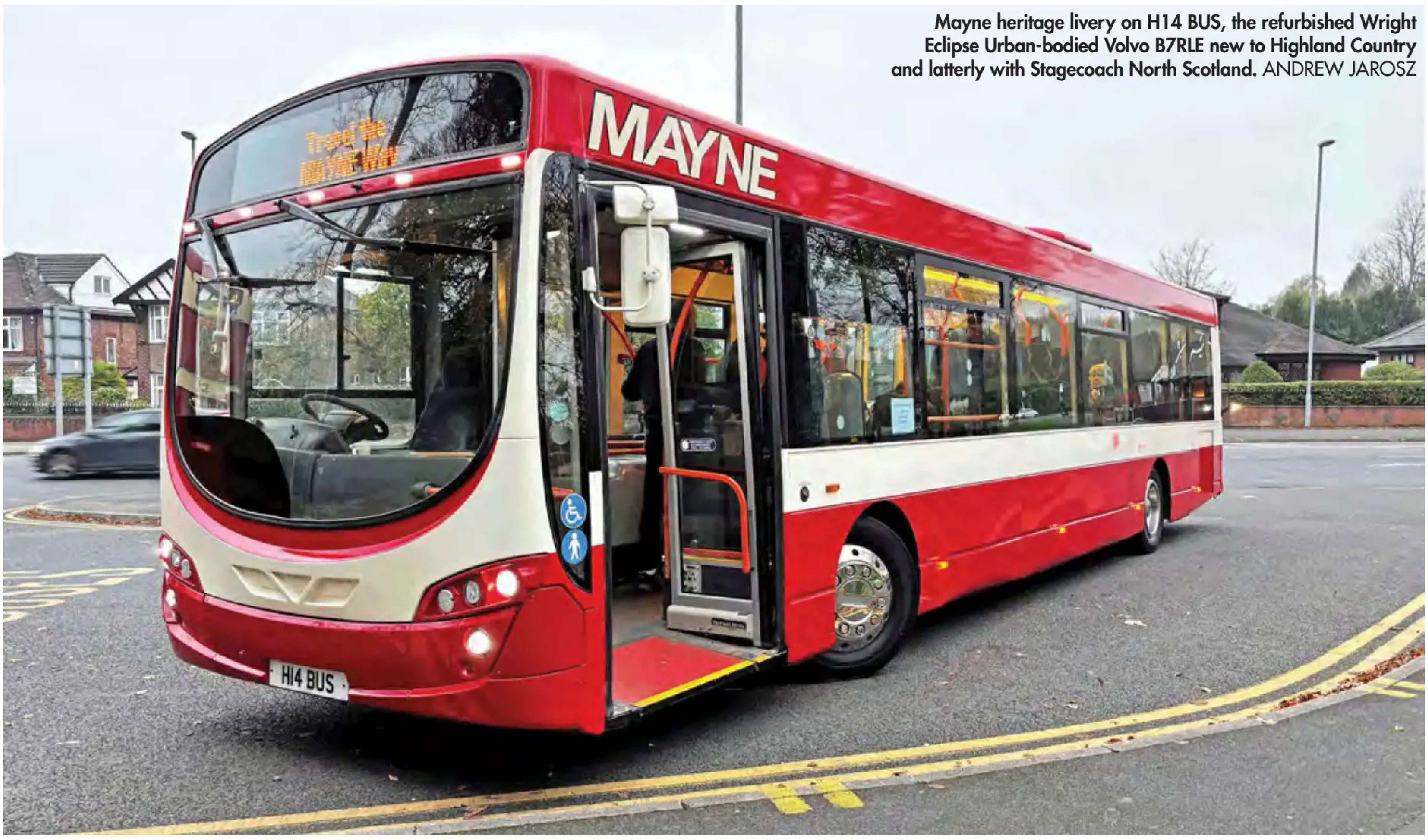
OT54 BUS is one of seven former Eavesway Van Hool Altano inter-decks in the fleet. It was acquired in 2023 via Dreamline Travel of Blackburn and was new as YJ08 EAM. GRAHAM ASHWORTH



The Yutong GT12 bought for Megabus services, OT71 BUS, southbound on the M6. GRAHAM ASHWORTH



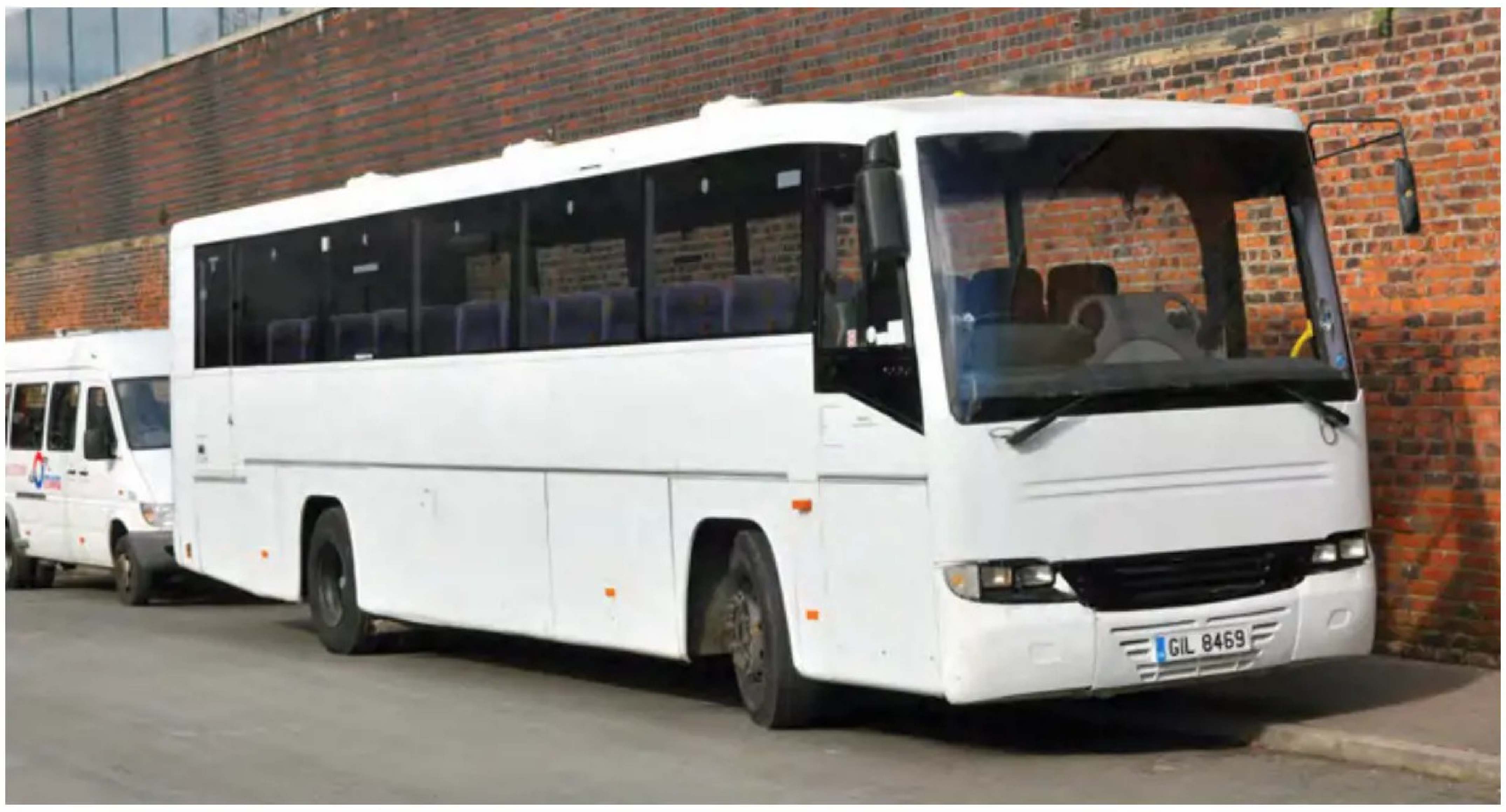
C1 UFC, the Altano that serves as the Carlisle United FC team coach. ANDREW JAROSZ



Mayne heritage livery on H14 BUS, the refurbished Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE new to Highland Country and latterly with Stagecoach North Scotland. ANDREW JAROSZ

Livery: Dark metallic grey for VIP and team coaches, white with grey stripe for contract buses and coaches. Van Hool Altano inter-deck C1 UFC (*WE14 BUS, YJ08 EAP*) is overall blue for Carlisle United FC.

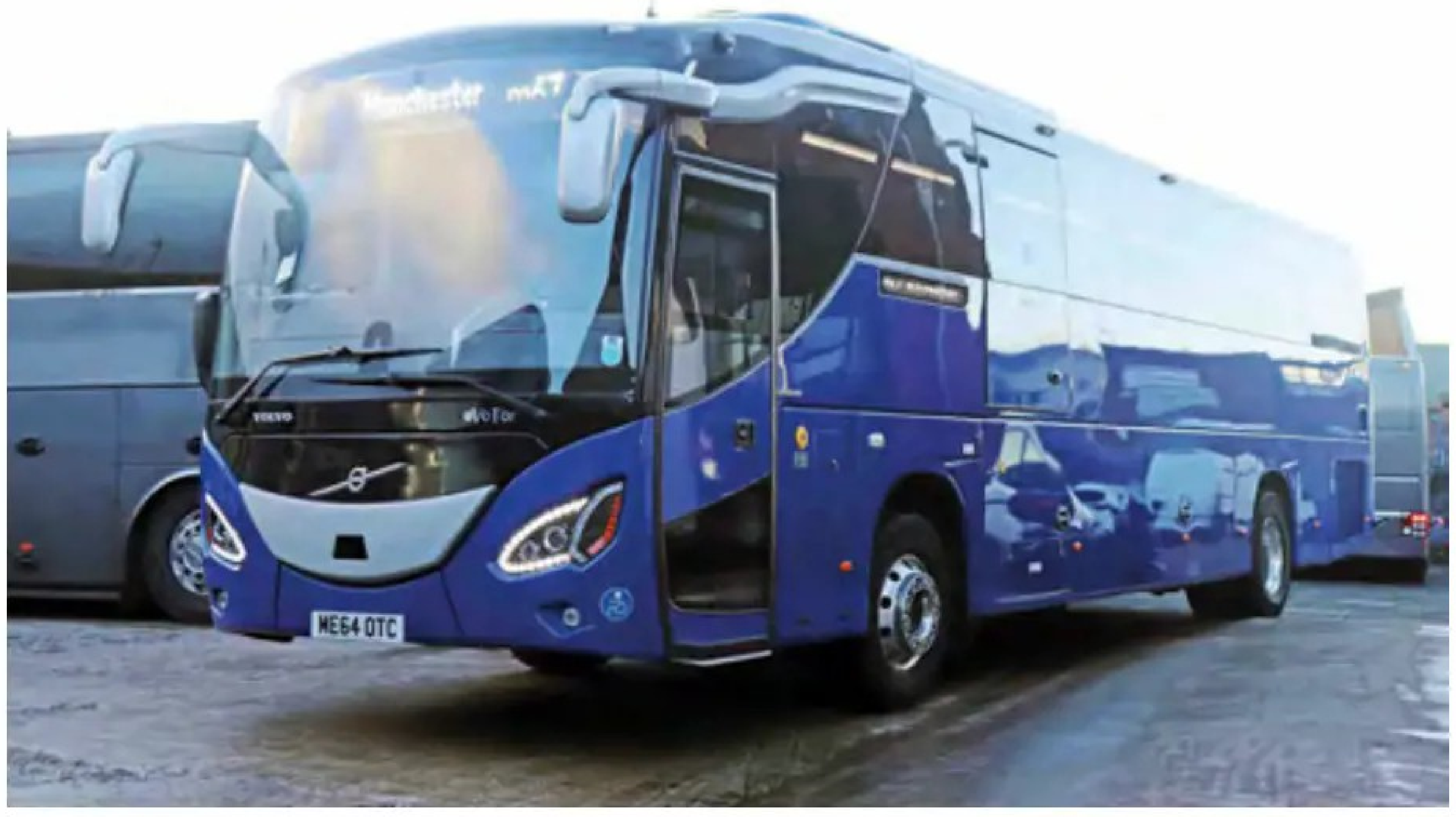
Volvo B7RLE /Wright Eclipse Urban H14 BUS (*SY07 CFA*) painted in Mayne red and cream as a nod to the heritage of a company that ran stage carriage and registered local services between Manchester city centre and Droylsden, along Ashton New Road, from 1922 until Stagecoach acquired its bus operations in 2008. This is its second heritage livery, as it was new to Rapsons-owned Highland Country in 2007 and in Stagecoach ownership carried the 1970s poppy red and peacock blue of Highland Omnibuses and registration 703 DYE originally on London Transport Routemaster RM1703. It has an Eclipse 2 front.



The ex-Dunn-Line MMCI-rebodied Volvo B10M-61, GIL 8469. GRAHAM ASHWORTH

How many vehicles?: Twenty-seven of which 19 coach (seven Van Hool Altano inter-deck, three Van Hool Astron, two Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor, one each Van Hool Astromega double-deck, Volvo B12B/Van Hool Alizée, MAN/MOBIpeople Explorer, Yutong GT12, DAF SBR4000/Berkhof Axial, tri-axle Volvo B13R/Jonckheere SHV, Iveco Daily 70C18/Noone Turas 600), four single-deck bus (two Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban, one Alexander Dennis Enviro200, one Optare Versa yet to enter service), three double-deck bus (two Scania N230UD OmniCity, one Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400) and one Mercedes-Benz Sprinter minibus.

Newest vehicles?: Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor ME64 OTC and OT74 BUS new in September 2024. ME64 OTC delivered in Megabus blue for a contract finished in December when Megabus withdrew its services within England and Wales.



One of two new Volvo B8Rs with MCV EvoTor bodies is ME64 OTC in Megabus blue. ANDREW JAROSZ

Most interesting vehicles?: Tri-axle Volvo B13R/Jonckheere SHV OR10 NJH was new to Birmingham International Coaches but was sold to Lomas Trucks to transport the owner and his customers to football games. Its high specification interior has 36 seats and a full galley/rear lounge. Van Hool Altano C1 UFC (*YJ08 EAP*) was new to Eavesway, Ashton in Makerfield and was Manchester United's team coach. Orion acquired it for a new contract to provide the Carlisle United team coach and had it wrapped and re-registered W14 BUS.

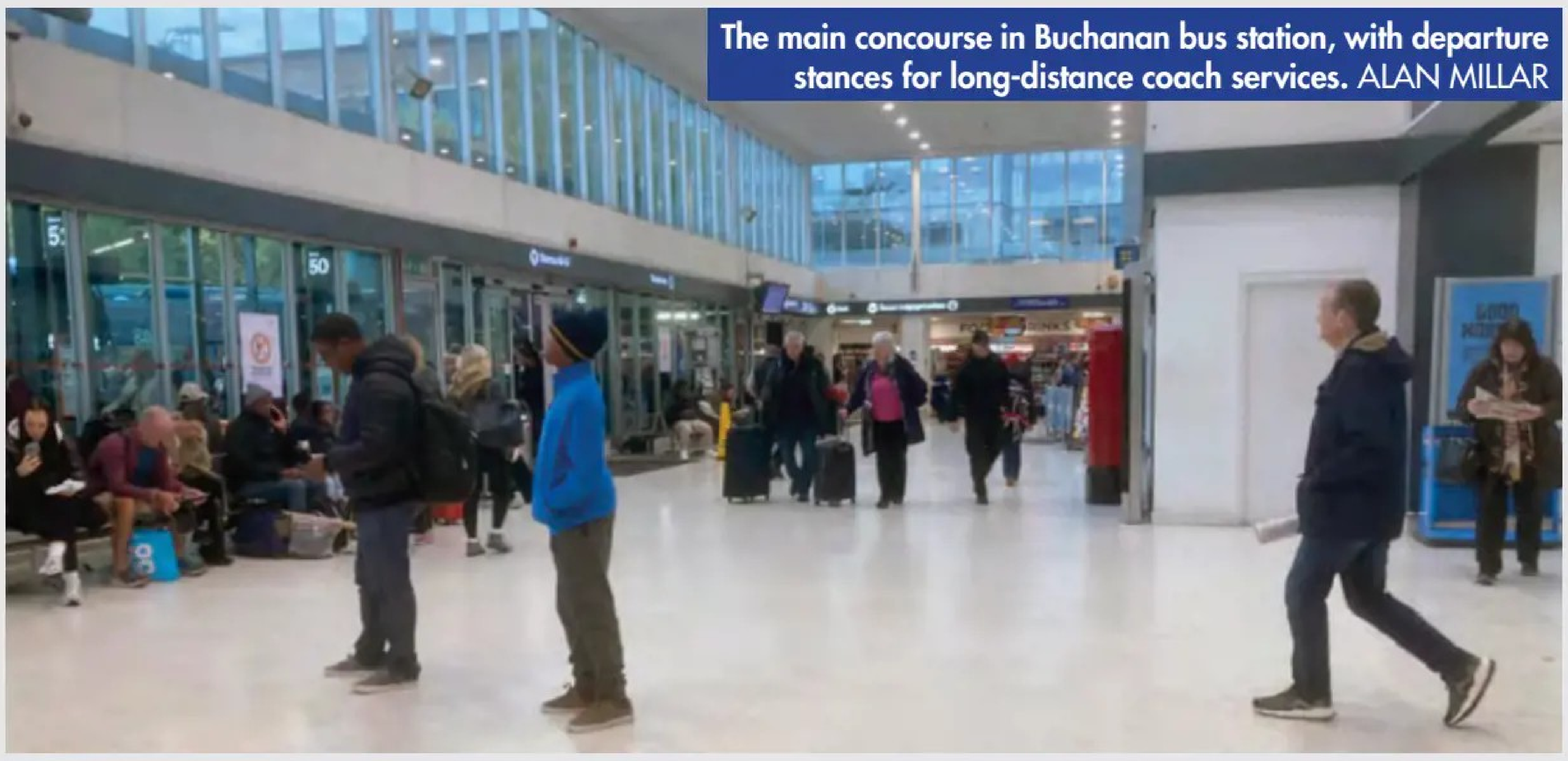
Past fleet included GIL 8469, a 1982 Volvo B10M-61 with 2001-built MMCI C55F body manufactured in North Macedonia, acquired 2008 ex-Dunn-Line for whom it was one of several rebodied. It was new to Western SMT with a Duple Dominant III Goldliner C46Ft body as its V130 (GGE 130X).

■ **By ANDREW JAROSZ**

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
HCT	HCT Group
NX	National Express Group
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

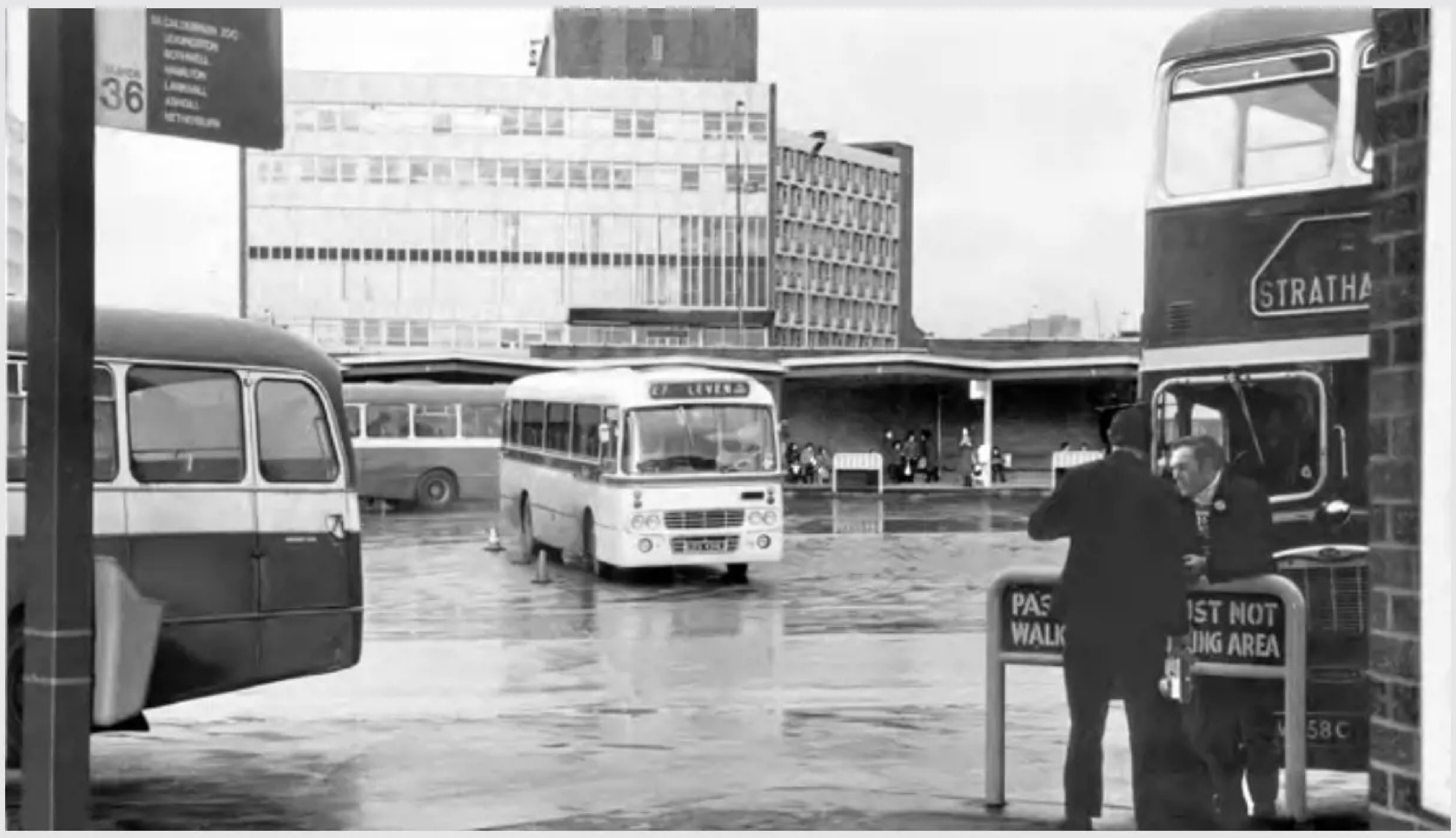
Masterplan to revamp Buchanan bus station


The main concourse in Buchanan bus station, with departure stances for long-distance coach services. ALAN MILLAR

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has commissioned engineering services company AtkinsRéalis to create what it says will be a "new vision" for Glasgow's 48-year-old Buchanan bus station, improving transport links and better meeting the needs of future users.

Scotland's biggest and busiest bus station, Buchanan handles more than 500,000 bus and coach departures annually and sits within an area of the city centre that is fast evolving, with plans being made to transform the nearby Buchanan Galleries shopping centre. The bus station was built for the state-owned Scottish Bus Group and opened in December 1976. SPT has owned and operated it since 1993. It is the terminus for many First, Stagecoach, McGill's, Scottish Citylink, Flixbus, Ember and National Express services and is the principal city terminal for visiting tour coaches.

AtkinsRéalis is to develop what it says will be a "future-focused masterplan" for the bus station and its wider site, intended to drive positive change within the city centre while creating a world-class transport hub by integrating public transport services with active travel and the multi-modal Clyde Metro mass transit system which SPT hopes to start building in the 2030s.



Buchanan bus station in January 1977, the month after it opened. An Alexander (Fife) Leyland Leopard with Alexander Y-type body on an all-stops service to Leven is in the central parking area that today is much busier. Y-type Leopards of Central SMT and Alexander (Midland) are in departure stances, while the conductor and driver of one of Central's Bristol Lodekka FLF6Gs chat before leaving on route 54 to Strathaven. The passenger waiting areas are less open to the elements today. ALAN MILLAR

Chris Crombie, technical director for architecture at AtkinsRéalis, says: "Buchanan bus station has long been a central transport hub for Glasgow. But it needs to be fit for purpose for the future which requires a new vision for its role both as a bus station to enable transport links, and as a destination in itself. The updated bus station will play an important role in helping SPT to deliver its goals of improving service levels, sustainability, and safety of the transport system."

While aspects of the bus station have been modernised since 1993, principally to improve the passenger experience and the safety and efficiency of operations, its layout has remained largely unchanged since it opened. The new facility is expected to include infrastructure to support electric buses and other vehicles.

■ All services using Buchanan bus station were diverted to kerbside stops across Glasgow city centre on the afternoon and evening of November 20 when a security alert caused its immediate closure, along with several streets in the area. The adjacent Glasgow Caledonian University was evacuated, the Royal Concert Hall cancelled an evening performance and trains in and out of Queen Street high level station were suspended for part of the evening while bomb squad dealt with a suspicious item found in the bus station.

New and repowered electrics for First Aberdeen

First Bus is investing £12.7million in Aberdeen with a new fleet of 36 electric buses, comprising 24 new Wright StreetDeck Electroliner double-deckers and 12 repowered buses, converted from diesel engine to electric drive.

First partnered with Robert Gordon University to announce the investment, recognising that the university's students will be the primary beneficiaries of the new buses as they will be used on routes 1 and 2 linking the university campus at Garthdee in the south of the city with the city centre and Bridge of Don in the north. They are the present-day successors of Aberdeen Corporation's last electric tram service, linking Bridge of Dee and Bridge of Don, which diesel buses replaced in May 1958.

Set to join the Aberdeen fleet from the beginning of 2025, the new vehicle investment solidifies First Bus's dedication to achieving a fully zero-emission fleet by 2035. The new buses will make the proportion of zero-emission vehicles in the First Aberdeen fleet one of the highest in the UK.

First Bus Scotland managing director Duncan Cameron, says: "This investment is a game-changer for Aberdeen. It not only aligns with our green ambitions but also underscores our commitment to providing more sustainable and comfortable transport options for the city. It was a pleasure to meet with students from Robert Gordon University to discuss the impact the new buses will have on the university and hear firsthand their passion for sustainability. By significantly increasing the number of zero-emission buses in our fleet, we are taking bold steps to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions, making Aberdeen a cleaner and healthier place to live."

This initiative is part of First Bus's broader commitment to the principles and targets it set out during COP26, the United Nations climate change conference in Glasgow in 2021. Since then, First Bus has made significant strides towards its goals, including the transformation of the Caledonia depot in Glasgow into the UK's largest electric vehicle charging hub, capable of charging 150 electric buses simultaneously.

Where to send your reports ››››

Scottish reports should be sent, please, to: **Sandy Macdonald, 12 Morton Gardens, Maxwell Park, Glasgow, G41 4AF.** Email **scottishcolumn@gmail.com** to reach him by **January 17** for the **March** issue.

AAA Coaches, Kirknewton
C53Ft-seated Yutong GT12 coaches AD74 AAA, LA74 TRA were new in October.

Ace Travel, Airdrie
C53FL-seated Yutong GT12 H24 MCL was new in October.

Plaxton Panther C70F-bodied Volvo B12B FJ55 DZK (*RJI 2719, FJ55 DZK*) joined the fleet in May ex-Fishers Tours, Dundee.

Caetano Levante-bodied Scania K410EB6 BU18 OSP was acquired by Rooster Bus, Chard last April.

Anderson, Langholm
KVC C24F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D CX54 JFN (*B13 MPB, YN54 XXO, J111 LMW, YN54 XXO*) was acquired in September ex-Ellenvale Coach Company, Fletchertown.

ARG Travel, Coatbridge
Altas-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi RJ24 DMF was re-registered OO24 ARG soon after it arrived in August.

Caetano Levante-bodied Volvo B9R KRZ 7551 (*FJ11 MMO, L100 SWT, FJ11 MMO*) reverted to its original registration before leaving the fleet in August, together with similar LRZ 5966 (*NX04 AAA, FJ60 HYC*).

The contract to provide Strathclyde Partnership for Transport service 205 (Hairmyres Hospital-Hamilton) has been extended for two years, to terminate in July 2027.

Austin, Earlston
C53F-seated VDL Futura FHD2-122s MG16, 17 SMT joined this fleet in October ex-REL South Mimms, Welwyn Garden City and were re-registered USU 643, W66 AMA respectively when they arrived.

Avondale, Clydebank
B28F-seated MX12 DYN, DZK are the latest Alexander Dennis Enviro200s to be acquired, together with similar B29F-seated former demonstrator YX62 EEY; all three arrived by October ex-Phil Anslow, Varteg Hill.

BARC Coach Hire, Innerleithen
M11-seated Ford Transit EA65 ZTP was acquired in December 2023 ex-Shorts Self Drive, Dalkeith. Vauxhall Vivaro SA63 HGY was sold in July.

Bay Travel, Lochgelly
H41/30F-seated Scania N230UD OmniCity LX59 CMF/Z joined the fleet in July ex-Tyrer, Farnworth and H41/24D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400s LX11 BHP/U were acquired in September ex-Stagecoach London 19796/7.

Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B9R L500 BAY (*YY14 NLK*) regained its original registration in October.

Borders Buses CG
Scania N230UD OmniCity double-decker 11108 (YT11 LSE) rejoined this fleet by November, having been transferred from West Coast Motors.

Bright Bus MG
PO41/26D-seated Alexander Dennis Tridents 8924/6 (LK08 FND, NVO) were transferred to this fleet from Midland Bluebird in September and have been allocated to Livingston; 8924 is in Bright Bus Tours orange livery and 8926 is in orange-based Stirling Sightseer livery.

Canavan, Cumbernauld
The registrations for services 147/A (Monklands Hospital-Kilsyth) and 247 (Monklands Hospital-Kirkintilloch) were cancelled at short notice from November 3 but replaced by new registrations for services 347 (Monklands Hospital-Cumbernauld) and 447 (Cumbernauld-Kirkintilloch via Blackwood), effective from November 4.

Central, Aberdeen
Further to last month's report, former Ministry of Defence Plaxton Cheetah-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D arrived registered FY14 YXV. It reverted to original registration SV14 DXY in June before becoming D17 CTC later that month.

Coast to Coast, Ardrossan
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi WP73 MVC was re-registered CC23 CST in September and in October Mercedes-Benz Tourismos BX64 CZZ (*MHZ 9210*), TH16 TTH (*MHZ 8055*), BN17 JJX became JIG 3782, KIG 7872, XJF 448 respectively.

Irizar i6 integral IRZ 181 (*YT65 BYY*) left the fleet in September.

C&R Coaches, Gourock
Sitcar Beluga C25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D WA12 AWF (*815 DYE, WA12 AWF, WE51 WAY, WA12 AWF*) arrived in September ex-Stantons of Stoke, Cheadle.

Dumfries & Galloway Council
Optare Solo M880SL 105136 (YJ07 VRM) passed to Stantons of Stoke, Cheadle by August.

Easter Ross, Tain
This company's licence authorisation was increased from 14 to 16 vehicles in November.

Eastern Scottish MG
Wright StreetLite DFs 0413/5 (SK63 KKU/X); Wright StreetLite Max 0425/35-8/53/72/5-7/9 (SN14 DXG, SN64 CKJ-L/O, CPO, SN65 OJZ, OKR-T/V); and Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLEs 2276/82/99, 2304-6 (SK57 ADX, AEA, SN09 FBD, HY09 AZO/N/J) were sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet in September and October (0479, 2306).

GROUP CODES
DG Comfort Delgro
FG FirstGroup
LB Lothian Buses
MG McGill's Bus Service
NX National Express Group
ST Stagecoach Group

megabus.com M76
West Coast Motors
Irizar
West Coast Motors
YT22 EWP

Borders Buses was only a short-term contractor for Megabus. It began operation of service M76 (Berwick-London via Newcastle, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Leeds, Meadowhall, Derby and Loughborough) in September, with one round trip, leaving Berwick at 13:10 on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and returning at 23:45, with journey time each way of 9hr 30min. The last day of operation was November 24. Just five minutes into its southbound journey on November 9, West Coast Motors-branded Irizar i6S 12205 (YT22 EWP) was on the A1 at Scremerston with friendly waves from the driver and co-driver. JOHN YOUNG

CAMERON'S CAMERA

Central SMT standardised on Leylands — mainly Titan double-deckers (class L) and Tiger single-deckers (class T) — from 1934 until 1942, and it returned to the marque from 1946 onwards.

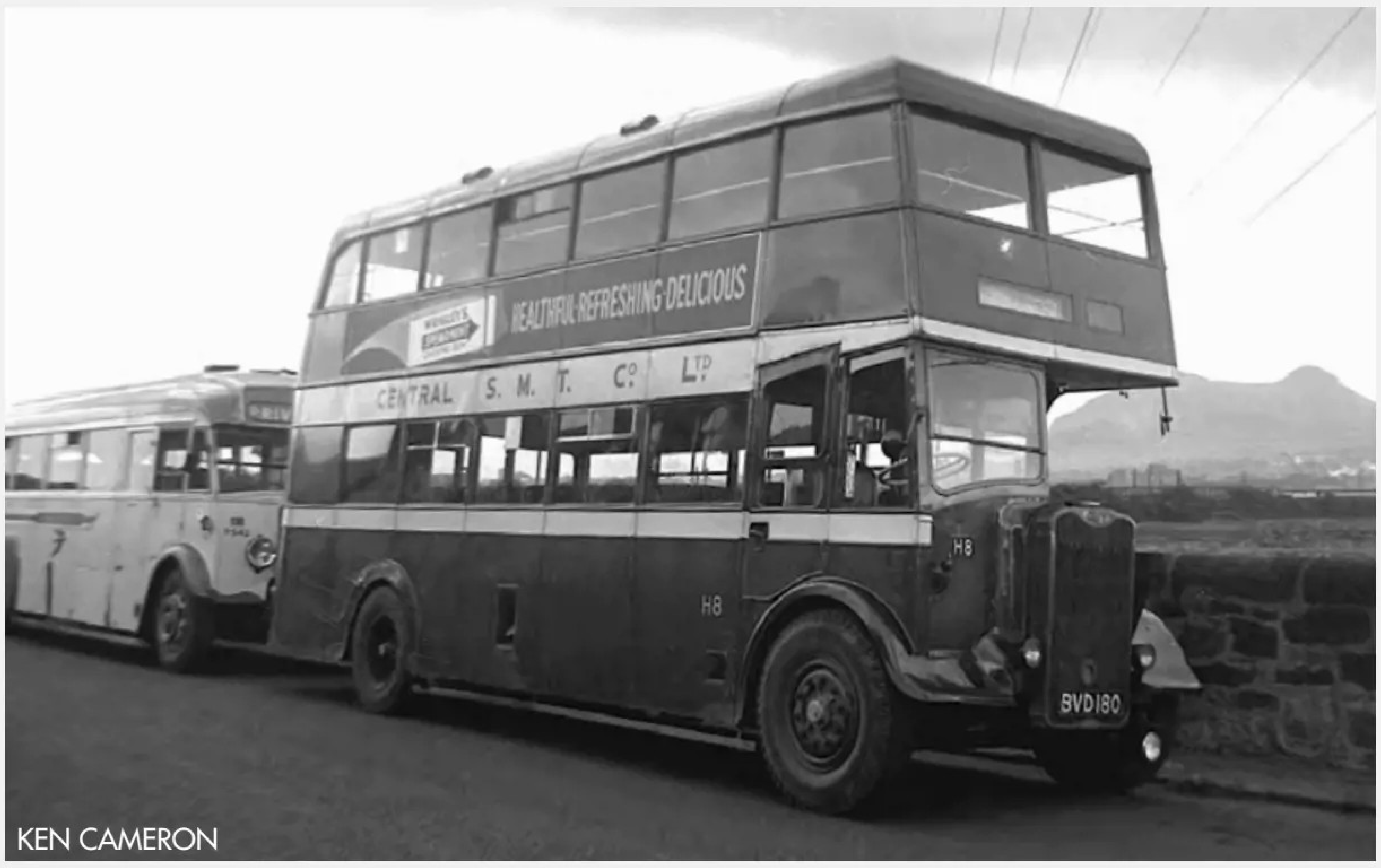
With Leyland diverting its manufacturing to military equipment and the Ministry of Supply dictating who built what for whom, its subsequent wartime intake was of lowbridge utility double-deckers with unfamiliar chassis. A solitary Bristol K5G was numbered E1, ten Daimlers (two Gardner-engined CWG5s and eight AEC-powered CWA6s) were D1-10, but the most numerous were 41 Guy Arabs delivered between 1943 and 1946 as H1-41.

Bodywork was by Brush, Northern Counties, Massey, Strachans and Roe. All had Gardner engines, but these were a mix of five-cylinder 5LW and six-cylinder 6LW.

The K5G, the only Bristol double-decker supplied new to an SMT fleet before state ownership brought hundreds of Lodekkas to Central and its sister companies, was withdrawn in 1956. The preselector gearbox Daimlers were rebuilt in the early 1950s with Leyland engines and manual transmission, and all were gone by 1958.

The last of the utility Guys were kept until 1960. Such was Central's satisfaction with them that it bought 70 more Guys between 1948 and 1954, 20 of them underfloor-engined Arab UF single-deckers. All 54 single-deckers had K-prefixed fleetnumbers.

Seven with Massey bodywork included H8 (BVD 180), a 6LW-engined Arab II new in October 1943. It was among ten originally in the fleet of Lanarkshire Traction Company, a subsidiary acquired by Central in 1932 and absorbed into the main business in November 1949. It was far from its normal haunts when Ken Cameron photographed it in Portobello, Edinburgh in July 1958 with the distinctive outline of Arthur's Seat behind. It was withdrawn in May 1959.



KEN CAMERON

Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE 2262 (MX56 ACZ) and Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B7TLs 2849/50 (YN53 EFP/R) were sold for scrap to Clyde Metal Recycling (dealer), Greenock in September and October (2850).

Edinburgh Coach Lines
This operator's licence was revoked from October 21 without a public inquiry, but a new licence application was published in Notices & Proceedings the following week.

Festival Travel, Winchburgh
Neoplan N2216SHD Tourliner OU17 OSV was acquired in September by The Big Lemon's Brighton Horizon business.

First Aberdeen FG
Wright Eclipse Gemini H45/29F-bodied Volvo B9TLs 37457-60/9,70, 37545/6/50 (MX58 EAO/P/Y, EBA, MX09 GXY/Z, GYE/J/D) were transferred from First Glasgow in September; they all arrived in 2024 First purple and grey livery apart from 37546 which is in previous group livery with First Greater Manchester fleetnames.

First Glasgow FG
The latest repaints into the current livery include Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 33266, 33918, 34388; similar 33393/4, 33409 (all ex-service 77 blue fronts); Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B9TLs 37192, 37220, 37461/71, 37549; similar 37203 (ex-service 61 light blue front); BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City 38458; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 44668, 67026/9/63/6; and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 67724.

Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE 69339 has been repainted into driver training livery.

Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B9TLs 37457-60/9,70, 37545/6/50 (MX58 EAO/P/Y, EBA, MX09 GXY/Z, GYE/J/D) were transferred to First Aberdeen in September.

Fishers Tours, Dundee
Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B12Ms MX05 AGZ (*BHZ 1257, MX05 AGZ*), MX05 AHD (*BHZ 1256, MX05 AHD*) were sold for scrap in October to Hardwick (dealer), Carlton.

Plaxton Panther C70F-bodied Volvo B12B FJ55 DZK (*RJI 2719, FJ55 DZK*) passed to Ace Travel, Airdrie in May, while Caetano Levante-bodied Volvo B9R FJ12 FYB (*ASZ 3953, FJ12 FYB*) was sold to Moffat & Williamson, St Fort in October.

Gillen/Glen, Greenock
October additions to this fleet were C57F-seated Bova Futura FHD120.365 SA08 EHC (*WSV 568, SA08 EHC, NFZ 404, SA08 EHC, OO08 HCC*) ex-Gardiners NMC, Morpeth; C39F-seated Temsa MD9 GP16 SXL (*MD16 LYN*) ex-Lynns Travel, Eastbourne; and C57Flt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/3 TY69 GER ex-Tiger European, Nottingham.

Irizar-bodied Scania K360EB4 YT11 LUA became OAZ 166 in October.

Handicabs, Loanhead
From the start of October, all the Edinburgh Dial-a-Bus services provided by this organisation were registered, as follows: 301 (Cammo-Gyle shopping centre), 302 (Muirhouse-Gyle shopping centre), 303 (Slateford-Gyle shopping centre), 304 (Gilmerton-Cameron Toll), 305 (Tollcross-Cameron Toll), 306 (Inch-Morrisons, Gilmerton), 307 (Craigmillar-Cameron Toll), 308 (West End-Morrisons, Ferry Road), 309 (Broughton-Asda, Newhaven), 310 (Newhaven-Sainsburys, Blackhall), 311 (Corstorphine-Sainsburys, Blackhall), 312 (Cramond-Sainsburys, Blackhall), 313 (South Queensferry-Gyle shopping centre), 314 (Colinton-Morrisons, Oxgangs), 315 (Bruntsfield-Morrisons, Oxgangs), 316 (Braids-Morrisons, Oxgangs), 317 (Viewforth-Tesco, Colinton), 318 (London Road-Asda, The Jewel), 319 (Duddingston-Asda, The Jewel) and 320 (Balerno-Gyle shopping centre). A further service, 69, serving Asda, The Jewel, was registered to start on December 16.

Each service provides one return trip, with 301 to 303 operating on Mondays, 304 to 307 on Tuesdays, 308 to 313 on Wednesdays, 314 to 317 on Thursdays, and 318 to 320 on Fridays. Concessionary bus passes have been valid on each of the services since November 1.

Hobson Travel, Larkhall
Plaxton Profile-bodied Dennis Javelin PR08 BET was re-registered Y13 HOB in October.

Hogg, Jedburgh
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX72 OJR, named *Betty Boop*, was re-registered AH06 BUS in September.

Houston, Lockerbie
MCV EvoRa-bodied Volvo B8RLE SD74 KRJ was new in November

Optare Solo M9600SR 712 (SK10 AFP, *EH10 EMH, SK10 AFP, MH04 EMH*) passed to McCall, Lockerbie in September.

Hunter, Tullibody
MCV EvoRa C53FLt-bodied Volvo B8RLEs SF74 YML/M were new in September and October respectively.

Jamieson, Cullivoe, Yell
Noone Turas 900 C37FL-bodied DAF LF180 YE11 BUS was new in September.

Johnstone and Area Community Transport, Kilbarchan
B20F-seated Optare Solo M780SL 13 (YJ54 UXO) was acquired in September ex-Ferguson, Stirling and became D24 CCT when it arrived.

Licence authorisation was increased to four vehicles in November.

JP Coaches, Forfar
B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC SN69 ZKW was acquired in October ex-Britannia Parking, Bournemouth. Another recent arrival is EVM Cityline M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi RJ17 OCX.

Onyx-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 614D XIL 6465 (*MM54 GSM, XIL 6465, SF54 COA, MM54 GSM, SF54 COA*) reverted to MM54 GSM in February.

Lochs, Leurbost, Lewis
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs YX24 OVW/Y were due to leave the fleet in November and will be replaced by the two similar new buses on order for the 2025 cruise ship season. Former demonstrator Enviro400 MMC SK71 CKX left the island in November to be refurbished internally with its tables removed and repainted from Alexander Dennis livery into fleet colours before it returns.

Further to last month's report, new EVM-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinters GX74 AAK, ABU are both C21F-seated 517CDi.

Lothian LB
Further new MCV H64F-bodied Volvo BZL electric double-deckers delivered by mid-November were 711-4/6-20e (SF74 YMK, YOH/J/K/M-P/R).

Lothian Country Buses LB
New daily service X19 (Edinburgh, Regent Road-Winchburgh via Newbridge and Kirkliston) began on December 1, operating up to half hourly. From the same date, night service N43 (Edinburgh-Queensferry) was extended to serve Kirkliston and Winchburgh, some journeys extending to Dechmont.

Lothian Motorcoaches LB
Yutong GTe14 tri-axle demonstrator electric coach YD24 EUB was on loan for a few weeks in early November.

McCall, Lockerbie
B32F-seated Optare Solo M9600SR SK10 AFP (*EH10 EMH, SK10 AFP, MH04 EMH*) was acquired in September ex-Houston, Lockerbie 712.

McDade, Uddingston
C48Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 BU18 YSO (*GB18 RCT, BU18 YSO*) joined this fleet in October ex-Rogerson, Tranent.

MacMillan, Eoligarry, Barra
This operator's licence was surrendered from November 5.

McNairn, Coatbridge
Plaxton Primo YX60 BZM was sold for scrap by September.

Service 35 (Cumbernauld town centre-Craigmarloch/Balloch) was cancelled from October 25.

Midland Bluebird MG
Further repaints into current fleet livery by October include Wright StreetLite Max 0439, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 4105/6, and similar 4200-3/10/1/3 which also carry service X38 branding.

Partial open-top Alexander Dennis Enviro400s 8924/6 (LK08 FND, NVO) were transferred to Bright Bus in September. Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 4106/7 (YX19 OSU/V) were transferred to Xplore Dundee in November for operation on a new tendered service in Aberdeen.

Wright StreetLite DFs 0447/56 (SN64 CJY, SN65 OJG) and Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLEs 2275/80, 2302 (SK57 ADO, SN57 MSU, SN09 FAU) were sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet in September.

Wright Solar-bodied Scania L94UB 1614 (SN55 JVL), Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLEs 2245/52 (SF06 GZZ/R) and Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B7TL 2855 (SN55 HFF) were sold for scrap to Clyde Metal Recycling (dealer), Greenock in September, followed by similar Scania/Wright Solar 1611 (SN55 JVG) in October.

Wright Axcess Floline-bodied Scania L94UB driver trainer 1600 (Y344 XBN) and similar Wright Solar-bodied 1601 (SN53 KHK) also left the fleet in September and October respectively.

The start of operation of City of Edinburgh Council tendered services 13 (Lochend-Craigleith Retail Park) and 60 (Holyrood Gait-Haymarket via Dumbiedykes) from December 2 was accompanied by the introduction of new service X39 (Livingston depot-Edinburgh city centre or Lochend) – effectively the three placing journeys in the morning and evening for services 13 and 60.

Milligan, Mauchline
Higer Touring C41Ft-seated Scania K360CB4 YN74 XWP was new in September.

Moffat & Williamson, St Fort
Further to last month's issue, new Mellor Strata-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinters WX74 RXH/U are seated B21F and WX74 RXT, SUY are B27F.

Mellor Strata B26F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi LN66 EXK was acquired in August 2023 ex-Eurocoaches, Yate. Caetano Levante C48Ft-bodied Volvo B9R FJ12 FYB (*ASZ 3953, FJ12 FYB*) was acquired in October ex-Fishers Tours, Dundee.

Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B12B tri-axles SW09 URH, USD (*LSK 513, 831; SW09 URH, USD*) were sold to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke in October, and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC SN66 WHL went to Bus & Coach Centre (dealer), Oxford in November.

80000
Stagecoach
SC74 ZEB

Alexander Dennis has provided new generation Enviro400EV double-deckers as seed vehicles for trials by the big UK groups. Stagecoach's example, 80000 (SC74 ZEB), went into service with the East Scotland fleet in November in Dunfermline where it was photographed on driver familiarisation. DAVID OAKLEY

GROUP CODES

DG Comfort Delgro
FG FirstGroup
LB Lothian Buses
MG McGill's Bus Service
NX National Express Group
ST Stagecoach Group

A July 2023 view of Stagecoach East Scotland 13052 (SA15 VTU), one of the Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC-bodied Volvo B5LHs operated on the service 73 corridor in Dundee. Stagecoach has begun transferring them to Metroline Manchester for Bee Network services. The group has 66 of this body/chassis combination, 42 with East Scotland at Arbroath and Perth depots and 42 in London. ALAN MILLAR

Offshore Helicopter Services, Dyce
Optare Solo M7200SEs YJ67 FZS/T were sold to BCA (dealer), Glasgow in September.

Peace, Echt
M16-seated Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi SK74 VEB was new in September.

Prentice Westwood, West Calder
Beulas Stergo C53Ft-bodied Iveco EuroRider 397E.12.35 G8 MCT (*YN05 ASV*) was acquired in August ex-Lakeland, Kendal. B27F-seated Optare Solo M780SE MX07 JNJ (*V6 WMS, MX07 JNJ*) also arrived then ex-Key, Johnstone.

Ratho Coaches, Newbridge
Following its visit to Lothian Motorcoaches, Yutong GTe14 tri-axle electric coach demonstrator YD24 EUB was on loan for a few days in mid-November and used on Citylink service M90 journeys between Edinburgh and Perth, Broxden.

Caetano Levante III C55FLt-bodied Scania K410EB6 tri-axle BF68 LDN joined this fleet in October ex-National Express 251 and was re-registered RCZ 480 when it arrived.

Rogerson, Tranent
August acquisitions were Caetano C49Ft-bodied Mercedes-Benz Touro 1836RL BX54 EBA (*K4 UCL, MY51 SLE, BX54 EBA*) ex-Ultimate, Barnsley and Berkhof C53F-bodied Volvo B12B SN06 AEF (*570 PRR, SN06 AEF*) ex-Lees, Lumphannan. The latter was re-registered DRZ 434 when it arrived.

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 GB18 RCT (*BU18 YSO*) regained its original registration before passing to McDade, Uddingston in October.

SD Travel, Whitburn
C53F-seated Yutong GT12 SJ74 USB was new in October.

Other arrivals then were Plaxton Profile C57F-bodied Volvo B7R YN10 ACY (*X2 STX, YN10 ACY*) ex-Stanley Travel, Oxhill and Plaxton C33F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D YN11 AXZ (*641 RHU, YN11 AXZ*) ex-A-Line, Coventry.

Temsa Safari YJ10 DLK was sold to Copart (dealer), Wolverhampton in October.

Silver Fox, Renfrew
Irizar i6 integral YN15 YTL (*V200 SWT, YN15 YTL, C9 GHP, YN15 YTL*) was re-registered DA13 DDA in October.

Stagecoach East Scotland ST
Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV demonstrator 80000 (SC74 ZEB) joined this fleet in November, allocated to Dunfermline depot and used on service 19 (Rosyth-Ballingry). It is in Stagecoach local livery and was expected to move on to another group fleet after a couple of months here.

Stagecoach North Scotland's new Volvo 9700DD tri-axle double-deck coach 50517 (SF74 YNA) was on loan for training purposes in October/November.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 10671-84 (SN16 OYT-Z, OZA/B/J-M, SN66 WHC) have been transferred from Stagecoach West and have all been allocated to Arbroath depot, where they have replaced Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC-bodied Volvo B5LH hybrids on services 73/A/C (Ninewells Hospital-Dundee-Arbroath); of these, 13043 (HY14 BUS) was re-registered SR15 NKW in October and 13041/53 (SJ15 PUY, SA15 VTY) have been transferred to Metroline Manchester with others expected to follow in November.

Preserved AEC/Park Royal Routemaster 19971 (EDS 50A, *WLT 560*) has also joined this fleet recently, having previously been allocated to Stagecoach West Scotland.

The latest recipients of local livery include Alexander Dennis Enviro400-bodied Scania N230UD 15635, 15764 (the latter previously in yellow distance livery); Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 27604/12; and Plaxton Elite-bodied Volvo B9R 53722 (previously in Stagecoach stripes heritage livery).

Alexander Dennis Enviro400s 19022/45/57/62/4/6/7 (MX06 XAY, SN56

As reported last month, Stagecoach West Scotland is trialling four Yutong E12s, intended for Stagecoach Midlands at Rugby, on trunk service 4 (Glasgow-Kilmarnock-Ayr). Loading at Jamaica Street in Glasgow city centre in October was 73053 (YK74 PMV). MURDOCH CURRIE

AWV, MX56 FSG/O/S/V/Y) were transferred to Stagecoach East Midlands by October; 19064 was still in Alexander (Fife) heritage livery when it departed. Alexander Dennis ALX400-bodied Tridents 18449 (VU06 KFN), 18507/9 (SP06 EGU/X) have also moved to Stagecoach East Midlands. Optare Solo M925SRs 47958 (YJ15 AEL), 48036 (YJ66 ASZ) have gone to Stagecoach Yorkshire.

Stagecoach North Scotland ST

CH65/16Dt-bodied Volvo 9700DD tri-axle coaches 50517-22 (SF74 YNA-D/G/H) were new in October in Scottish Citylink livery and are allocated to Inverness depot, though 50517 was used initially by Stagecoach East Scotland for training purposes.

The latest repaints into local livery include Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19219; MCV EvoRa-bodied Volvo B8RLE 21398; Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 27104/10, 27798, 27801; and Alexander Dennis Enviro200s 36193/4. In October, Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B13R tri-axle 54137 lost its yellow distance livery in favour of allover white.

Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B9R driver trainer 53617 (KX58 NCU) was loaned to Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire in October.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27917 (SN63 VUS) and similar Enviro200s 36583 (YX63 LGD), 37260 (SL64 HWT) have been transferred to Stagecoach Midlands; correcting last month's report, Enviro200 36066 (SY57 AXR) did not pass to Stagecoach Midlands in August but similar 36957 (YX63 LHD) left the fleet by October.

Alexander Dennis Enviro350H hybrids 29001-10/20-2 (SV12 CZR-U/W-Z, DAA/O, SK63 ATU/V/X), 29011-9 (SP12 DYG/H/J/M/N/S-V; *495 FFJ, 128 NNU, HSK 791, YJU 694, PSU 371, ESK 986, HSK 792, NXX 451, 900 RWX; SP12 DYG/H/J/M/N/S-V*) have all been sold.

Operation of service 14 (Aberdeen city centre-Kingswells Village) was given up from November 23, the company having provided it since the city council cancelled funding for it in 2023. McGill's has obtained the new contract for its operation from November 24, with Stagecoach Bluebird passes being accepted until the end of December.

Stagecoach West Scotland ST

New Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV midibuses 46001/7-9 (YX74 OPS/C-E) entered service from Ayr (46001) and Kilmarnock depots in October. The first of seven new Citylink-liveried Volvo 9700DDs arrived in November as 50524/5 (SF74 YNK/N), although the correct fleetnumber for the latter is 50527.

As a consequence of Stagecoach's withdrawal from Megabus work in England and Wales, Plaxton Elite-i CH71/3Ft-bodied Volvo B11R tri-axles 54286-8 (YX67 UPO/P/R) were transferred to this fleet from Stagecoach South Wales (54286/7) and Stagecoach Northeast (54288) by October; they all arrived in Megabus colours but have been repainted into yellow distance livery.

Similar 54207 has also lost its Megabus livery for distance yellow, which has also been applied to Caetano Levante-bodied Volvo B9R 53732 and Plaxton Elite-bodied Volvo B11R tri-axles 54107, 54340; the latter pair previously carried service X77 branding. In addition to being repainted, 54107 (*X77 SCA, SF61 EYP, SF61 EYO*) reverted to SF61 EYP in October.

After McGill's withdrew its Eastern Scottish services in West Lothian towards the end of 2023, it transferred five ex-RATP London Alexander Dennis Enviro400s to Xplore Dundee. It has applied new branding to their Eastern Scottish livery, with 8963 (YX62 BPO) one of four allocated to routes 32/33 linking the city centre with the north-eastern housing estates of Fintry and Whitfield. ALAN MILLAR

Also in October, Alexander Dennis ALX300-bodied MAN 18.220 training bus 22405 was given a new driver trainer livery of mainly white with red front.

Not previously recorded, but Optare Solo M780SE 47934 was given the revised white/orange/grey Strathclyde Partnership for Transport livery for Arran operations in April 2023.

Preserved AEC/Park Royal Routemaster 19971 (EDS 50A, *WLT 560*) has been moved to the Stagecoach East Scotland fleet. Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 27615 (SF59 FYU), 27715/7/8/71/2 (PO11 BCK/V/X, PO61 NTG, PO12 GXU) were transferred to Stagecoach North East in October, when Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 37497-500 (YX19 OSE-G/J) moved to Stagecoach South East.

Van Hool TDX27 Astromega 50287 (YJ16 EJE) has been sold. Alexander Dennis ALX300-bodied MAN 18.220 22407 (SP06 DBZ), Alexander Dennis Enviro300-bodied MAN 18.240 22591 (SF08 GPY) and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27722 (PO11 BDF) were written off by October. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10925 (SN67 XAT) was destroyed by fire in Stevenston around 16:30 on November 7; according to Police Scotland Ayrshire, a boy and girl both aged 12, were identified, arrested and charged in connection with the incident.

Stuart, Carluke

Altas M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi RJ24 AYT was new in August.

Teviot Taxi, Hawick

M8-seated Ford Tourneo SJ24 GFB was new in August.

West Coast Motors CG

Altas M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi 42401 (RJ24 AHC) joined the fleet in August; it is operated from Campbeltown depot on behalf of Argyll & Bute Council and is in the council's livery of mainly white with green/blue waistband.

New MCV EvoRa-bodied Volvo B8RLEs 12418/20 had been repainted into fleet livery by November, ex-allover white.

Plaxton Panorama-bodied Volvo B11RLE tri-axle double-deckers 11910/2 (YX69 LHK/M) were re-registered J60, 80 WCM by November.

Scania N230UD OmniCity double-decker 11108 (YT11 LSE) has been transferred from Bute to Borders Buses once again.

The Strathclyde Partnership for Transport contract for provision of the non-commercial elements of service 15 (Glasgow city centre-Milngavie) has been extended for one year until July 2026.

Whitelaw, Stonehouse

MCV Evolution-bodied Volvo B8RLE BV17 CMO has been acquired by York Pullman.

Wigtownshire Community Transport

Services registered from October 21 are 410 (Stranraer-Glenluce), 411 (Stranraer-Portpatrick) and 412 (Stranraer-Leswalt/Ervie).

Woods, Tillicoultry

C49Ft-seated Van Hool EX15M JW02 BUS was new in September.

Xplore Dundee MG

As the nearest group operating company, Xplore Dundee has provided Aberdeen City Council tendered weekday service 14 (City Centre-Kingswells Village) from November 25, the previous operator having been Stagecoach North Scotland. Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 4106/7 (YX19 OSU/V) were transferred from Midland Bluebird to this fleet in November, to be transferred north to operate the service, based at the Altens depot used for the group's Flixbus operations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dundee Area Bus Forum, C Morrison, B Nicol, PSV Circle, J Sinclair, A Train and J Young have supplied news items this month. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

GROUP CODES

DG Comfort Delgro

FG FirstGroup

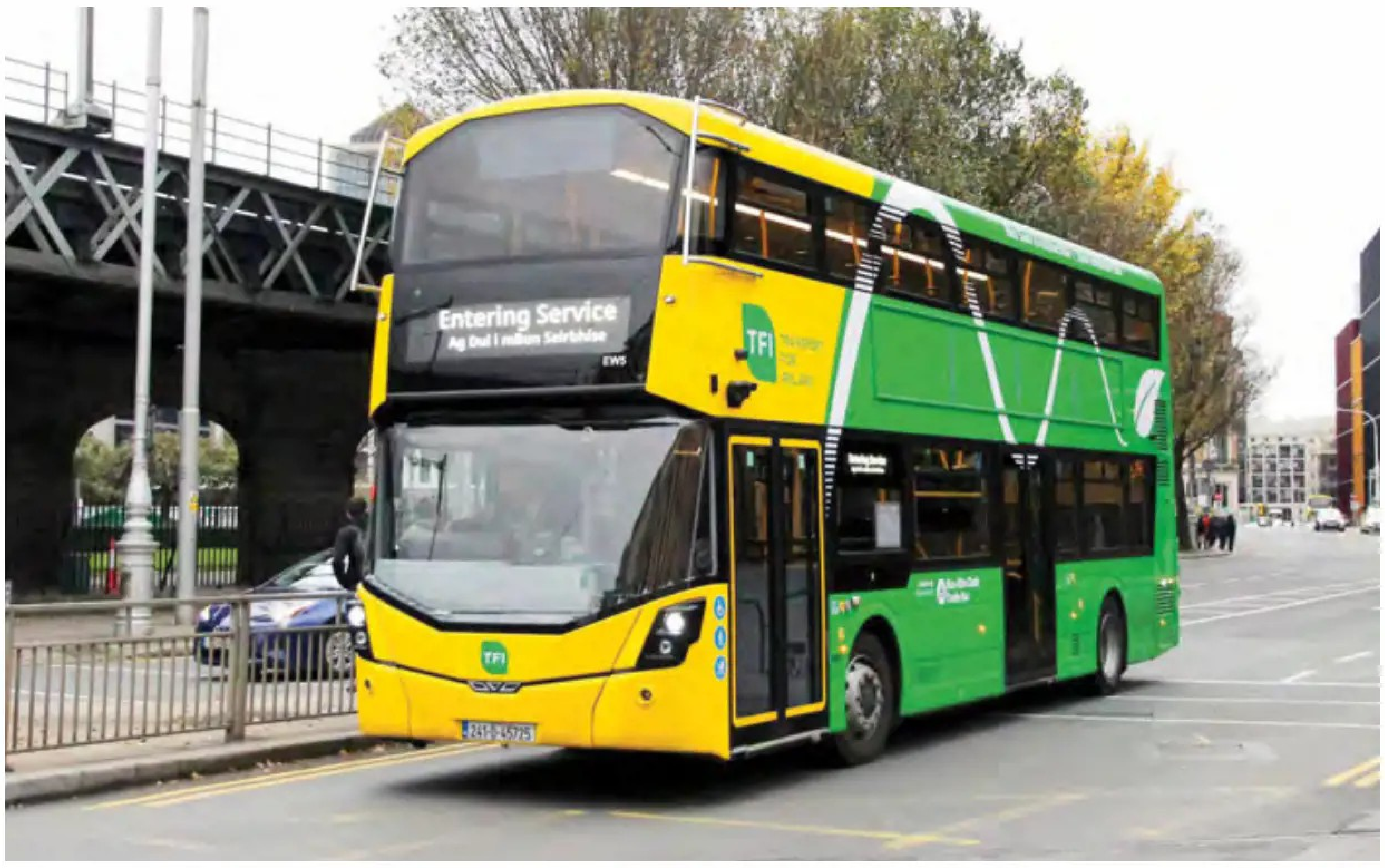
LB Lothian Buses

MG McGill's Bus Service

NX National Express Group

ST Stagecoach Group

Where to send your reports »»
Send your reports on Northern Ireland operators to: **Paul Savage** by e-mail to: **paul1629@hotmail.com** And the Republic operators to: **Ian Molloy, Willow Grove, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin,** or by e-mail to: **ianmolloy30@gmail.com**



Dublin Bus EW5 (241 D 45725), a Wright StreetDeck Electroliner, on Beresford Place in the city centre, alongside the elevated section of Dart suburban railway between Connolly and Tara Street stations. PAUL SAVAGE

TRANSLINK

Ulsterbus

Effective September 8, all vehicles based at Great Victoria Street, Belfast were transferred to a new allocation of Grand Central, coded GC, though still based on the same sites.

Wright GB Kite Electroliner 2671-3 (CYZ 771-3), destined for Craigavon, were put to work at Coleraine (2671/2) and Pennyburn (2673) in October.

Transferred from Metro in late October was Wright StreetDeck 3145 (LGZ 5145) which has been allocated to Ballymena. Similar 3144 (LGZ 5144) reached Omagh in November, becoming the first of the type there.

Wright GB Hawk 2549/56/7 (FXI 419, GXI 426, YUI 3757) and Wright StreetDeck Electroliners 3630-41 (FXI 410/1, GXI 422, FXI 383/4, CYZ 535, AVI 1336-41) have been returned from loan to Metro; 3631 returned in September, the others in October.

Following the accident reported last month when Newtownards-based Wright StreetDeck 3107 (JGZ 3107) overturned into a field, the school whose pupils were aboard requested the use of single-deckers on its routes. This required the transfer in from Downpatrick and Dungannon, respectively, of Volvo B7R/Wright SchoolRun 237/50 (MEZ 7237, NEZ 9250), similar 293 (OEZ 7293) (to replace 237), similar 360 (PEZ 9360) and Optare Versa V1170 1805 (TFZ 8805) from Metro. Transferred out were Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2270 (PEZ 2270) and Wright StreetDeck 3102/4 (FGZ 3102/4) to Dungannon and Downpatrick respectively, though 3104 was only away for two days.

Volvo B7TL/Alexander Dennis 2312 (IEZ 4312) was returned to service in September, at Enniskillen, where it replaced withdrawn 2315 (IEZ 4315).

Newtownards-based Volvo B7TL/Alexander Dennis ALX400 2875, 2980 (EEZ 2875, 2980) were delicensed to reserve in October, leaving similar 2878 (EEZ 2878), new in October 2005, as the oldest example in service. Also moved to reserve then, from Dungannon, was Optare Versa V1170 1834 (UFZ 1834).

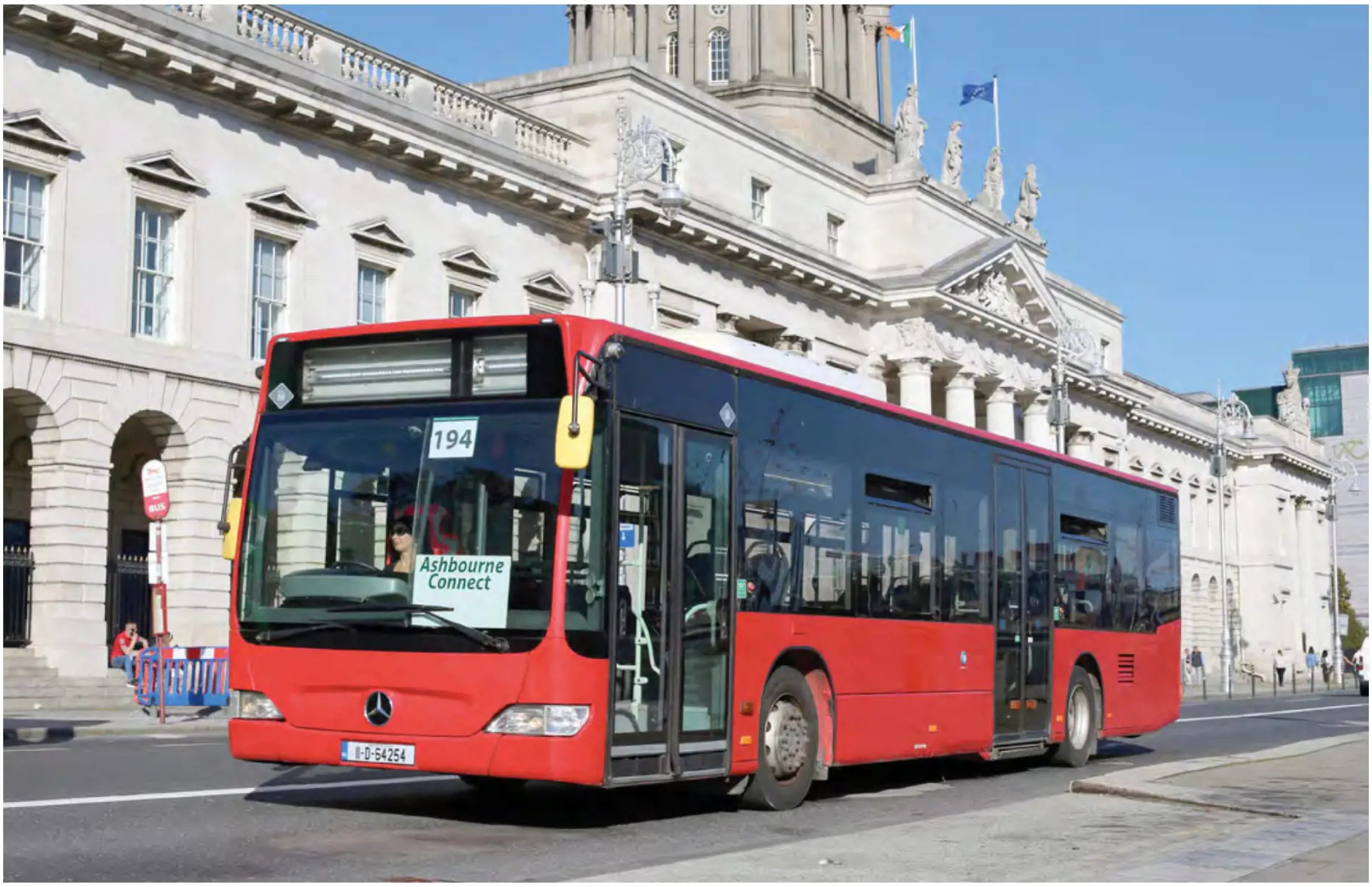
After spares recovery, Scania K320IB4/Irizar i4 1049 (LFZ 9049) passed to Hamill, Ahoghill (dealer) for scrap in October.

Metro

Wright StreetDeck 3144/5 (LGZ 5144/5) and Volvo B5TL/Wright Gemini 3 2118 (FGZ 3118) were painted into Ulsterbus blue in October/November.

The Kopparberg advertising wrap on Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 2369 (LFZ 9369) was removed in October.

Volvo B7R/Wright SchoolRun 360 (PEZ 9360) and Optare Versa V1170 1805 (TFZ 8805) were transferred to Ulsterbus at Newtownards in October, though 1805 only stayed a week.



Ashbourne Connect has purchased two Mercedes-Benz Citaros new to London United. Former MCL3 (BD11 LWP) has become 11 D 64254. DARREN HALL

PAUL SAVAGE & IAN MOLLOY

One of the open-top Alexander Dennis Envirto400s that Extreme Ireland has acquired ex-Stagecoach to operate City Sightseeing tours in Dublin, 06 D 124257, in O'Connell Street. PAUL SAVAGE

Wright GB Hawk 2549/56/7 (FXI 419, GXI 426, YUI 3757) were returned to Ulsterbus in October on termination of the rail replacement services. Wright StreetDeck Electroliners 3630/2-41 (FXI 410, GXI 422, FXI 383/4, CYZ 535, AVI 1336-41) were similarly returned on October 17; 3631 (FXI 411) having gone back in September.

CORAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

Dublin Bus

BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV single-deckers EA16, 20/4, 43 (241 D 39821, 39985, 40011, 40599) have entered service at Phibsboro', operating peak period Universal workings of routes C2, 37/38/39/A.

Former Airlink Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini VG50 (09 D 2149) has been sold at auction to Ashbourne Connect.

Bus Connects phase 6A has been deferred from a start date of November 24 to the first quarter of 2025. This provides more time to recruit sufficient drivers and maintenance staff and to address passengers' concern about the intended renumbering of long-established routes such as the 11, 46A and 84, with the 46A (Phoenix Park-Dún Laoghaire) coming in for particular attention.

Bus Éireann

New CH57/18D-seated VDL Futura FDD2-141.450 coaches LF226-8/30 are registered 241 C 11840-2/4. All except LF226 have entered service on route 245X (Cork-Dublin).

New BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV EA46-8 (241 SO 910-2) were delivered to Athlone on November 22 and are to be used initially on town services A1 and A2 along with similar EA49-55, although all ten will move to Sligo sometime during 2025 when charging infrastructure is ready. In preparation for this, Athlone-based EA9 (222 WH 815) was loaned to Sligo for a week in November to demonstrate it to the maintenance team, local public representatives and other stakeholders.

Scania L94IB/Irizar Century SC30 (04 D 24997) has been withdrawn. BMC 1100FE schoolbuses BS6, 7, 10-2 (07 D 2359/62/5/1/3) remain out of use at Dundalk but may soon be formally declared as withdrawn.

The National Transport Authority, Transport for Ireland, has approved purchase of a site near Cork Airport to function as a third garage (additional to Capwell and Tivoli) for the city, thus enabling both electrification and expansion.

OTHER OPERATORS

Ashbourne Connect, Co. Meath

Former Dublin Bus Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H45/20F 09 D 2149 has been acquired at auction.

Callinan, Claregalway, Co. Galway A new, unregistered Van Hool TDX21 Altano inter-deck for this operator was displayed at Euro Bus Expo in Birmingham in November.

CFT International, Belfast

VDL Futura FHD2-129.365 AC13 BBC (*G7 CHT, AC13 BBC*) was acquired ex-Charlotte Travel, Bonnyrigg in September and was re-registered with another Select plate, BH55 CFT, in October.

Extreme Ireland, Dublin

Four ex-Stagecoach London open-top Alexander Dennis Enviro400s have been acquired and painted in City Sightseeing red livery. They are registered 06 D 124257/61/3/4; their UK registrations have yet to be established.

Go-Ahead Ireland GA

Volvo B5TL/Wright Gemini 3 H45/22D 11656 (182 D 18075), previously Dublin Bus SG471, has entered service. It retains its non-standard white LED destination display.

Following the widening of a railway bridge, Dublin western orbital services W61 and W62 were amalgamated on November 24 and renumbered W6.

Go Safe Driver Training Solutions, Londonderry

Ex-Ulsterbus Scania L94UB/Wright Solar GEZ 7847 is in use here on driver training. Similar GEZ 7842 may also have been acquired.

MAN 24.360/Noge C8 NGC (*YN04 AWU, 1839 LJ, YN04 AWU*) has consequently been withdrawn.

J&K Coaches, Moneymore, Co. Londonderry

Neoplan N2216/3SHDL Tourliner OE16 WCD (*B19 VUE, OE16 WCD*) arrived in September. It was last with Belle Vue, Heaton Chapel.

Logan's, Dunloy, Co. Antrim

The last new vehicles bought for this fleet, in 2019, are in the process of being re-registered. Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite YX19 NBA/B have become WRZ 2622, 2223; Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther YX19 MWA/C-G/J/K are WRZ 2247, 2629, 2246, 2630/1, 3225/31/30 respectively; and Mercedes-Benz Atego 1223L/Plaxton Cheetah XL FJ19 NKE/F are WRZ 3228/9.

Lynch, Castlederg, Co. Tyrone

Van Hool EX15M coach 231 C 6384 (*YJ72 CFV*) was re-registered E24 LCH in September.

McComb's, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim

Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor AA15 MCT joined the fleet in August.

Quinn, Ardboe, Co. Tyrone

Iveco Daily 70C21H/Erener Revolution C33F midicoach AVZ 4312 was new in October.

Also acquired then was tri-axle Volvo B11R/ Plaxton Panther C61Ft MW18 DEV, previously with Moffat & Williamson, St Fort.

Eamonn Rooney, Hilltown, Co. Down

Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther MAN 111T (*FRZ 2073, MAN 111T, FRZ 2073, BT05 EBT*) reverted to FRZ 2073 in August.

As reported in June Fleet News, Magheroarty, Co. Donegal operator John McGinley took delivery of ten Volvo 9700 coaches last April, including two-axle 241 DL 1835. DARREN HALL

GUY'S HEROIC FAILURE

There are parallels between the stories of the Guy Wulfrunian and London Routemaster. Both were technically advanced double-deckers designed for an individual customer, sold at a premium price over what else was on offer at the time, and neither secured orders of any magnitude from organisations independent of their sponsors.

In percentage terms, the Wulfrunian was marginally more successful in the wider market, with five operators accounting for 5.1% of total deliveries, against just one — Northern General — taking a mere 1.7% of Routemaster output. But that shows how far facts may be spun. Those are percentages of wildly different totals. Only 137 Wulfrunians were built between 1959 and 1964, against more than 20 times that many Routemasters — 2,876, all but the first five of them between 1959 and early 1968.

Worse than that, while some Routemasters achieved remarkable working lives of over 40 years, only 18 Wulfrunians made it into double figures and none achieved more than 14 years. The average for a troublesome final batch of 30 was just over five-and-a-half years.

The lessons are that it you were a manufacturer meeting the special demands of a single customer, it was better if that influential customer was a huge and patient one like London Transport and not the West Riding Automobile Company which in the 1950s was one of the few large regional operators not part of a larger group and was in a rush to receive its new buses. And if you were such an influential customer, it was wiser to entrust your ideas to a better resourced manufacturer like Associated Commercial Vehicles (ACV), parent of AEC and Park Royal, than the financially fragile Guy Motors.

As Basil Hancock explains in this thorough and well-balanced account of the Wulfrunian saga, West Riding took its ideas to Guy after ACV declined to play ball. But of all the reasons why the Wulfrunian was so spectacularly unsuccessful, he argues that the greatest was Guy's lack of funds to invest in its development and rectifying its flaws.

Hancock's name is familiar to many readers as an author, professional bus engineer and enthusiast. Before emigrating to Australia in 1987, he worked for Leyland for 11 years in product development. He has been fascinated by the Wulfrunian since a teenager, he owned one of the two surviving examples now resident at the Dewsbury Bus Museum and is donating the profits of this book to the continued preservation of both those remarkable vehicles.

THE GUY WULFRUNIAN
MORE THAN JUST A BLUNDERBUS
Basil Hancock

Title:	The Guy Wulfrunian More Than Just a Blunderbus
Author/Publisher:	Basil Hancock
Distributor:	Classic Bus
ISBN:	978-1-7637446-0-8
Specification:	300mm x 210mm, 416pp, hardback
Price:	£49.50

And what a masterpiece it is, with a wealth of facts, figures, thoughts, photographs, diagrams, drawings and tables that set the Wulfrunian story in the context of the time it was conceived and how it influenced bus designs that came later. Divide the number of pages by the number of buses built and there are three for each one of them.

Legend has it that the design of the Wulfrunian — the name for a native of Wolverhampton, Guy's home town — was conceived in a steak restaurant in Wakefield when West Riding chief engineer Ron Brooke met with senior representatives of the manufacturer in the city where his company was based. True or not, this was a bus unlike any other.

West Riding served urban areas with low bridges, long gradients and poorly surfaced roads subject to mining subsidence from more than 60 working collieries. It wanted a lowheight double-decker with high seating capacity, efficient brakes, superior suspension and an economical Gardner engine. Ideally the bus would have a clutch and synchromesh gearbox, and crucially the engine would be at the front as this was one of many operators still sceptical about the rear-engined configuration of Leyland's revolutionary new Atlantean.

Guy met all of that with the Wulfrunian, although West Riding accepted the option of a semi-automatic gearbox with two-pedal control. It had a front entrance ahead of the front wheels, a Gardner 6LX or 6LW engine (AEC and Leyland were options that no one took up), a drop centre rear axle, disc brakes (actuated hydraulically) instead of drums, and air suspension, independent at the front.

Putting them together was a challenge. The long Gardner engine left no space for a conventional radiator, so it used the Cave-Browne-Cave heating and ventilation system with radiators either side of the upper saloon front, with ducts, shutters, vents, rods and water pipes to cool the engine and heat the saloons. That also allowed the driver's windscreen to be lower than would otherwise have been possible. Air intakes for the engine were in the offside lower front dash and on the offside behind the driver's cab; any on the nearside front were dummies for visual balance.

The front platform took up half the 8ft width of the chassis, so the engine was offset towards the offside to take up the next quarter of its width, with the driver squeezed into the remaining quarter. The engine was angled slightly to the offside and downwards towards the rear to keep the flywheel clear of the steering mechanism, and the gearbox, placed ahead of the rear axle, sat at a greater angle, slung partly beneath the chassis frame.

The lowheight layout left no space for the propshaft to pass over a conventional beam axle at the front, hence the independent suspension in which wheel hubs and suspension were mounted in welded sub-frames. There were surge tanks above the front wheels, precluding the placing of seats on those wheelarches.

Engine intrusion moved the staircase to the nearside, rising rearwards from the right-hand side of the platform. To avoid creating a blind spot for drivers, there was a triangular window in the staircase panel. When fitted with four door leaves, the second pair was narrower, fitting in the reduced space between the outer pillar and edge of the staircase.

Without power assistance, drivers discovered that the weight on the front made the steering uncomfortably heavy.

The anticipated benefit of disc brakes was that they were less likely to fade and their pads could be replaced more quickly than drum brake linings. Unfortunately, disc brakes — universal today — were not yet developed to meet the performance requirements of an urban double-decker. Midland Red gave up on them after finding them to be unsatisfactory in its first BMMO D9 double-deckers. Guy either ignored or was unaware of this. Brake fluid overheated on Wulfrunians and the front pads, more expensive than linings on a Guy Arab IV, wore out quickly. Even allowing for their faster replacement, annual brake costs were at least four times those of an Arab IV.

The other major weakness was the front suspension, which bore the weight of the hefty Gardner engine. Air bags failed regularly and although easy to replace, were expensive to purchase. To gain any economy of scale, West Riding needed to order them in greater quantities than it required. Severe cracking affected the king pin pillars and, by 1967, front hubs were failing, causing wheels to fall off. Eight seats were taken out of the top deck as a short-term fix, but long-term repairs became uneconomic.

West Riding had promised Guy it would buy at least 100 Wulfrunians. It took 126 (all with Roe bodywork) and relieved three other customers — County Motors (a business it part-owned), Lancashire United and West Wales — of four others and broke up Guy's two demonstrators for spare parts, but cancelled a further 25 it intended to buy in 1965/66.

It scrapped one with potentially repairable fire damage before its last 30 went into service and began withdrawals in earnest in 1968; the last departed in 1972. The cost of an overhaul to recertify a seven-year-old Wulfrunian was double that for an Arab IV, so only 30 of its 130 operational examples were recertified and only one of the 30, by then owned by another operator, was recertified after 12 years.

Eight of West Riding's passed to the Kirkby dealership in 1969, with seven sold on for further service. Six of those were out of use by 1971; the seventh was the bus that Hancock saved for preservation. The eighth is thought to have been the subject of a dire warning that a vehicle inspector gave its prospective new owner, a Nottinghamshire operator who had taken it on to his premises. "I haven't been here today," he advised him. "I haven't seen that vehicle and when I come back again, I don't want to see it. Get rid of it. Believe me, you definitely don't want it."

Other potential customers appear to have reached the same conclusion several years beforehand, despite — or maybe a result of — Guy's eagerness to demonstrate its "most advanced passenger vehicle in the world".

It was not knowingly under-demonstrated, with two of the three prototypes painted in the eye-catching yellow and black of Wolverhampton Wanderers FC and loaned to inquisitive operators throughout 1960 and 1961. Guy configured them with different seating layouts in case that might be a deal breaker, and their Wolverhampton registration numbers identified which was which: 7800 DA had 78 seats, while there were 72 in 8072 DA. Western SMT and Edinburgh Corporation borrowed both, perhaps hoping that their second experience would be better than the first.

Belfast Corporation borrowed the 78-seater from late November 1960 to late January 1961 and cancelled an order it had already placed for a single Wulfrunian. Other orders cancelled were from Rotherham Corporation for three, China Motor Bus in Hong Kong for two and Lancashire United for two which would have had a centrally-mounted engine, reduced front overhang and open rear platform Northern Counties body.

The only Wulfrunian that Northern Counties bodied was a "conventional" one for Lancashire United, which it offloaded to West Riding after only a year. The rear-entrance pair would have been 30ft long, just like the standard model. Accrington Corporation took two 28ft rear-entrance examples, with East Lancs bodies, in autumn 1961 and sold them before their first seven-year certificates of fitness expired. They also differed from all others in having synchromesh rather than semi-automatic gearboxes.

Accrington had no need of their low overall height. Nor did Bury (one standard model with a Roe body) and Wolverhampton, which exercised a civic duty to support its local manufacturer and took two 30ft Wulfrunians with East Lancs bodies. The first was much like all the others, but the second, delivered in autumn 1962, was unique. This had the engine position and short front overhang of the Accrington buses, a forward entrance and offside staircase behind the front wheels and conventional drum brakes which helped make it heavier than all other Wulfrunians. It succumbed to an air bag failure in May 1973.

Hancock struggles to understand why anyone would have chosen such a vehicle in preference to an Arab IV or its Arab V successor, just as he is puzzled by the apparent impracticality of a proposed single-deck Wulfrunian, for which West Riding placed and then cancelled an order for six.

But for all its weaknesses, he finds much to admire and leaves the reader wondering how much better the Wulfrunian might have been had Guy possessed the financial and engineering resources to overcome those deficiencies. Although expensive to maintain, prohibitively so by the late-1960s, they clocked up high mileages with few breakdowns. Objective testing confirmed the superiority of the suspension which, without the burden of supporting a front engine, made its way into Leyland's TN15 Titan and in large part into the highly successful Olympian. **AM**

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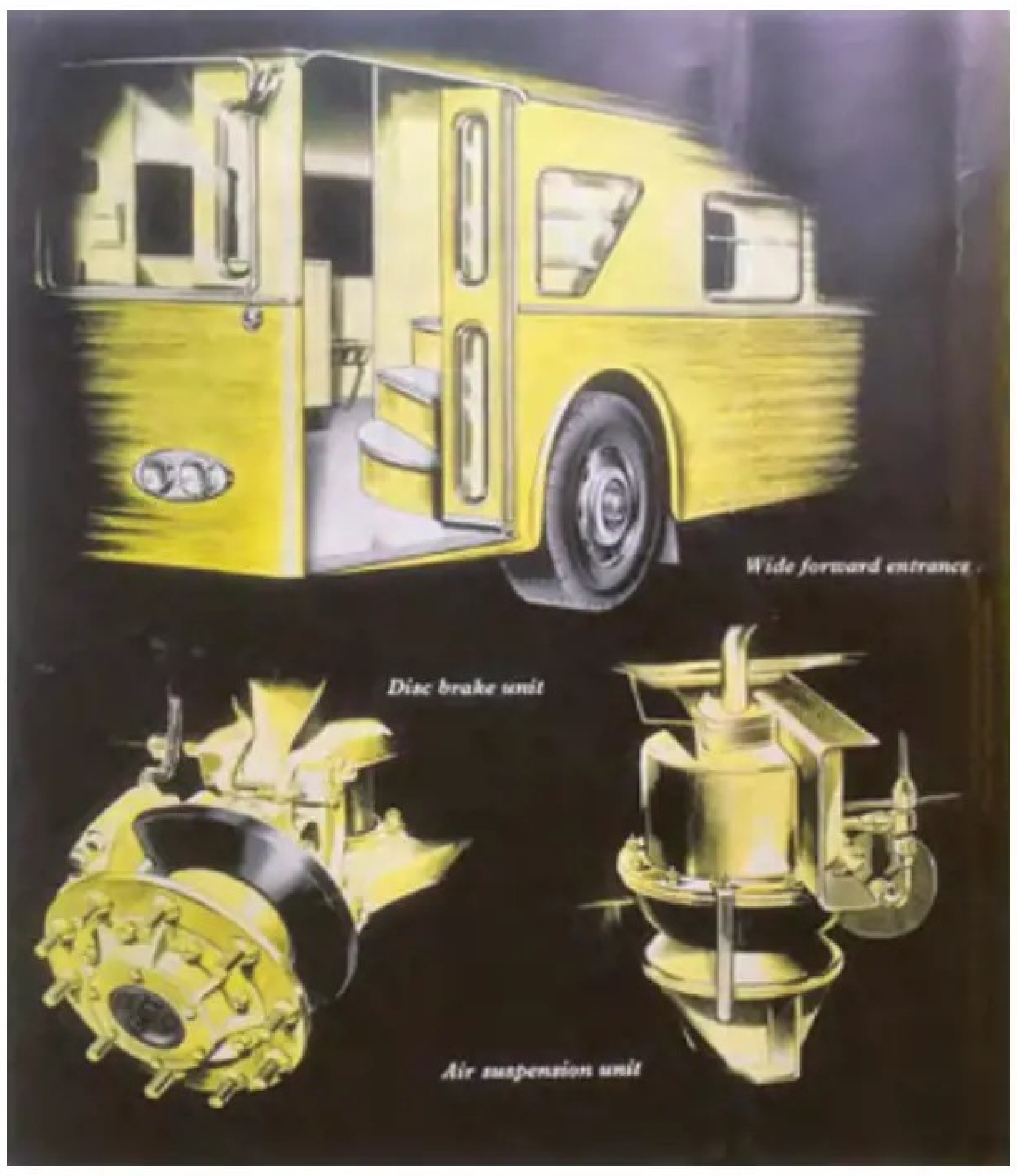
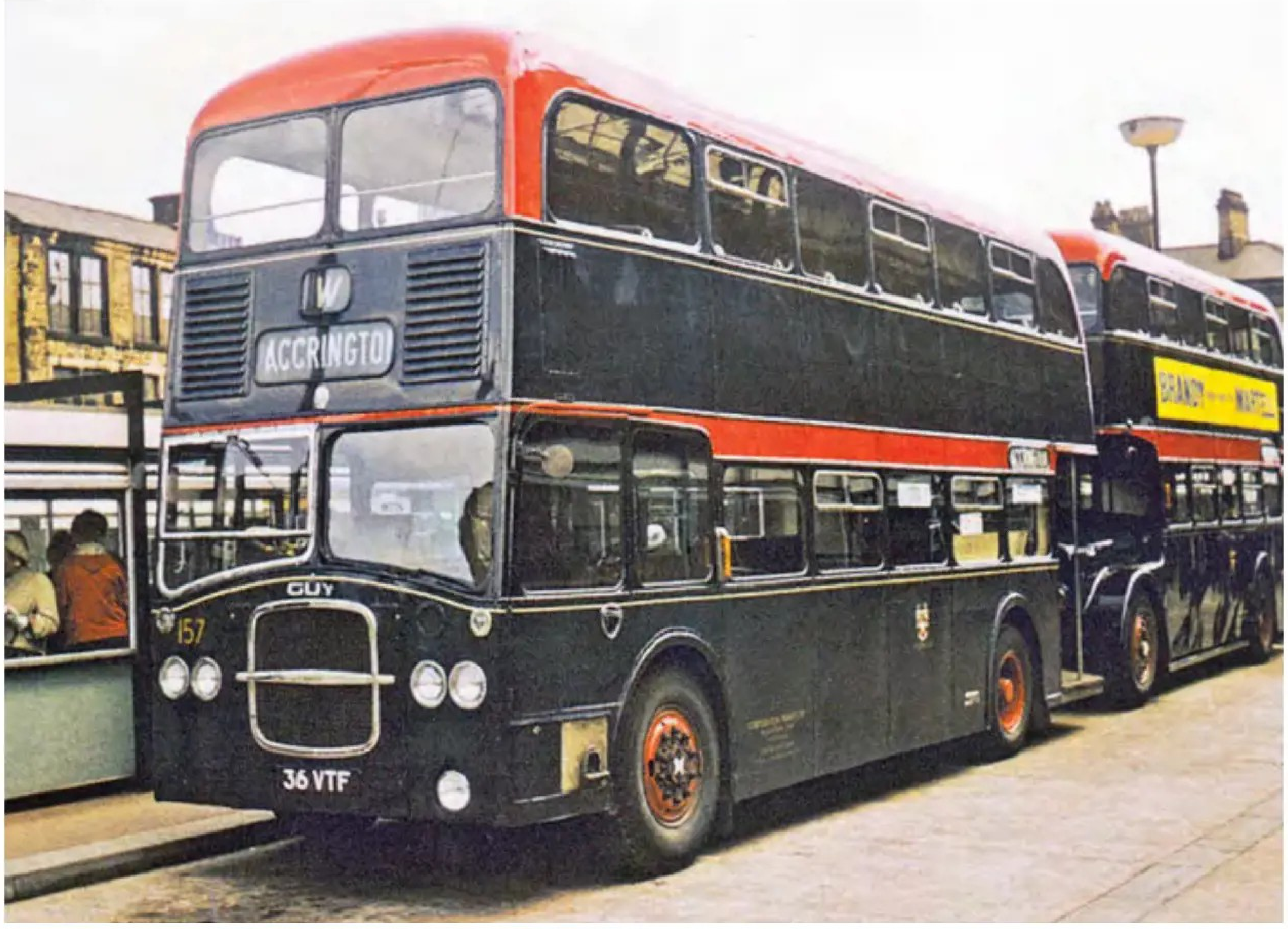
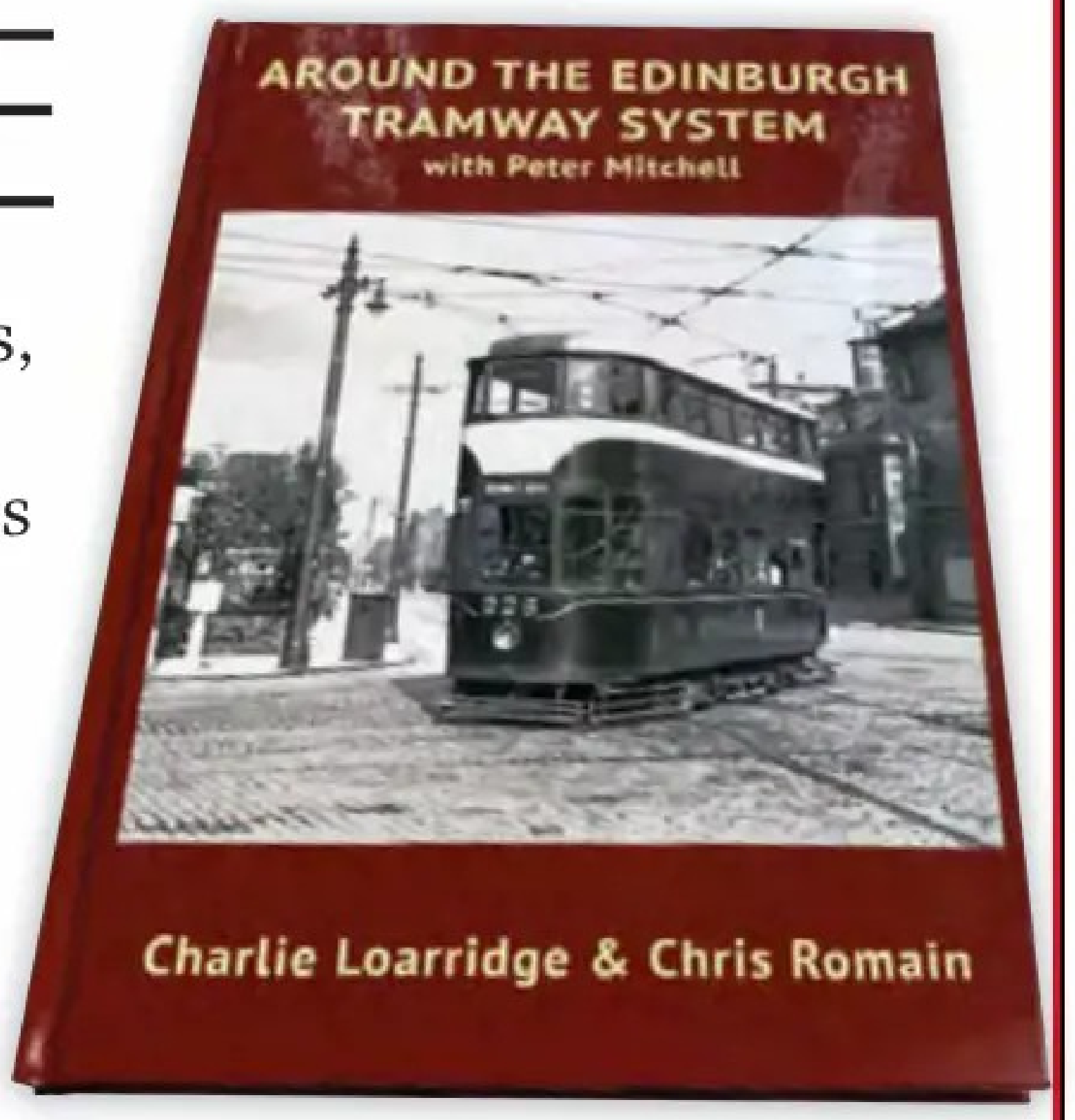
THE GUY
Wulfrúnian





FINAL YEARS OF EDINBURGH'S FIRST TRAMWAY AGE


AROUND THE EDINBURGH TRAMWAY SYSTEM
with Peter Mitchell
Charlie Loarridge & Chris Romain

Edinburgh has been the focus of several books lately and we will review another next month. This one is in the mould of Adam Gordon's *Around the Glasgow Tramway System* (Reviews, April 2023) and follows a similar format, showing hitherto unpublished black and white photographs taken by the late Peter Mitchell on three visits to the Scottish capital between 1951 and 1955, the year before buses replaced its last trams.

Besides taking technically good pictures, Mitchell also had an eye for atmospheric compositions, so there is plenty of streetscape and human activity to make this as much a record of a city 70 years ago as it is of the vehicles themselves. He walked the full length of each tram route, making meticulous notes of the time and date that each photograph was taken and of the location, including the nearest side streets to help pinpoint the exact spot.

These are presented route by route in numerical order, with a map of each and details of when they were introduced and withdrawn. There also is a large pull-out map by the late John Gillham, first drawn in 1986 and revised 11 years later, showing tram routes, corporation bus routes in 1939, local railways, track layout and tram lines authorised but not built, as well as enlarged sections for tram depots and the city centre.

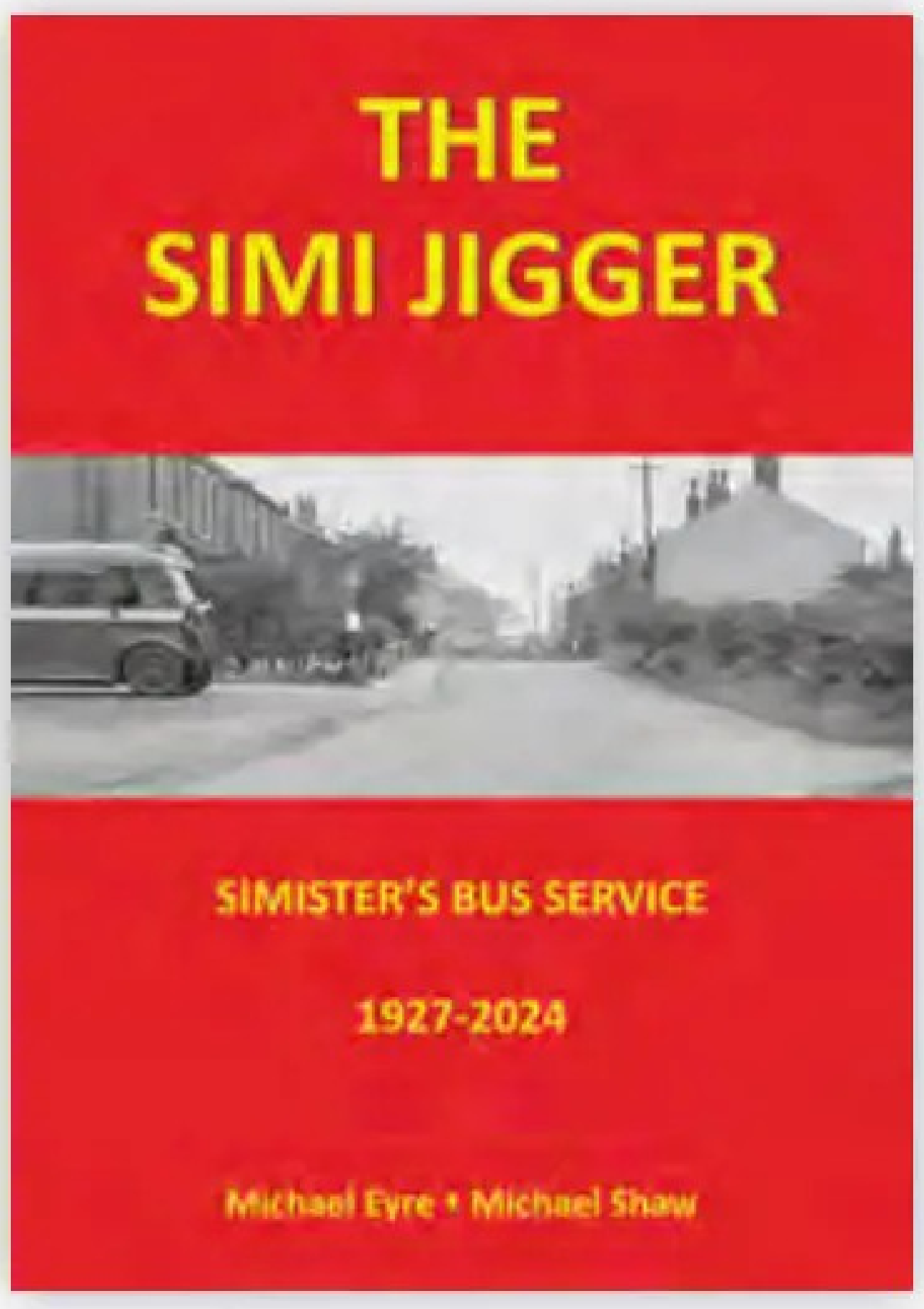
Title:	Around the Edinburgh Tramway System
Authors:	Charlie Loarridge & Chris Romain, pictures by Peter Mitchell
Publisher:	Adam Gordon
ISBN:	978-1-910654-39-2
Specification:	305mm x 215mm, 160pp, hardback
Price:	£30

A striking feature of all the photographs, even those taken in the city centre, is how little other traffic is about; there are often more trams than parked cars and commercial vehicles. Buses figure in a few, like a July 1955 view of an ex-London utility Guy Arab with postwar Duple body and a Leyland Titan PD2/20 with Metro-Cammell body in Nicolson Street, tram replacements pursuing a 1931 car. Corporation, SMT and Alexander's buses complement other scenes, while visiting tour coaches — a Southdown Leyland Tiger with halfcab Beadle body and a Duple Vista-bodied Bedford OB of Grey-Green — sit centre stage outside a hotel in Princes Street.

Many of the buildings shown are still standing today, but the businesses they contained have changed. A café in Morningside has replaced a shop that in 1951 repaired "cycles and perambulators", a Home & Colonial store in Corstorphine has gone the way of that once ubiquitous national chain, likewise the Leith Provident Co-operative Society (the "Provi" to its friends) and its fleshing department.

A two-page appendix summarises the tram fleet, allowing readers to identify the different types depicted around the system. **AM**

A RARE SURVIVOR IN GREATER MANCHESTER



The bus service linking the village of Simister with Prestwich was begun in 1927 not by Salford Corporation but private enterprise, thanks to long running friction between the councils of Salford and Prestwich.

A limited company, Prestwich Garages, was established so that the bus's 17-year-old driver, Jack Parry, could operate the route, which he did until 1946 when he quit bus operation to concentrate on road haulage. Salford City Transport took over from then with what became its service 4, which passed with the rest of the undertaking inn 1969 to Selnec (later Greater Manchester) PTE which renumbered it in 1973 and 1981.

It became a PTE-supported service from deregulation in 1986, contracted to various operators over the next 38 years, and as route 90 today is part of Transport for Greater Manchester's Bee Network, linking Simister and Sedgley Park and provided by Stagecoach. This is a rare example of a service barely altered over 97 years, with even the same departure times from Simister.

It is a happy story, which this book tells complete with details and photographs of many of the vehicles that have provided it over the decades, as well as maps and timetables. **AM**

Title:	The Simi Jigger
Authors:	Michael Eyre & Michael Shaw
Publisher:	Museum of Transport Greater Manchester
ISBN:	978-0-946022-09-0
Specification:	295mm x 210mm, 24pp, softback
Price:	£12

THE SHAPE OF STAGECOACH

2025
Stagecoach
Bus Handbook
British Bus Publishing

The new year's editions of these old favourites kick off once again with a Stagecoach volume that is 16 pages longer than its 2024 predecessor, largely it would appear through the inclusion of the Manchester depots at Hyde Road, Sharston and Ashton which change hands in January with the third tranche of Transport for Greater Manchester's Bee Network, a move that will transfer dozens of buses to other Stagecoach fleets.

The listings reveal the large numbers of electric vehicles on order or in course of delivery. These include 82 Volvo BZL single-deckers for Manchester, London, South West and Scotland, 39 of their double-deck equivalents for Manchester, 54 new generation Alexander Dennis Enviro200EVs for Midlands, East Midlands and South West, 340 Enviro400EV double-deckers for London, Midlands, East Midlands, West, South West, Manchester, Yorkshire and Scotland, 115 Yutong E12 single-deckers for the North East, Yorkshire and Midlands fleets.

More surprising, perhaps, are new diesel double-deckers for Bee Network contracts at Stockport — 50 Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs and nine Wright StreetDeck Ultroliners.

As ever, there is a generous selection of colour photographs depicting the variety of liveries in the current fleet, including heritage and special service schemes, as well as an example of the experimental allover slate blue scheme that the handbook says relates to discussions taking place around a new livery. **AM**

Title:	2025 Stagecoach Bus Handbook
Editors:	Stuart Martin & Bill Potter
Publisher:	British Bus Publishing
ISBN:	978-1-912063-25-3
Specification:	210mm x 147mm, 176pp, softback
Price:	£23.25

BUSES YEARBOOK 2025, PUBLISHED BY KEYBOOKS

Correcting last month's Reviews, *Buses Yearbook 2025* is published by Keybooks, the book arm of Key Publishing. It also is available for £9.99 in A4 bookazine format.

ENVIRO400 FOURSOME TO CHEER COLLECTORS, AND 11 MORE TO COME

Northcord is continuing to provide model collectors with a steady stream of detailed representations of modern British double-deckers, most recently with these examples of the Alexander Dennis Enviro400 in both the original form first produced in 2005 and the Major Model Change (MMC) version introduced nine years later.

There is a nostalgic look to its casting of long wheelbase original-style National Express West Midlands 4722, a 2007 vehicle that was repainted in July 2020 in Birmingham City Transport dark blue and cream with khaki roof and the city's coat of arms. This is part of an admirable policy that the operator has continued of honouring the municipal undertakings that were merged into West Midlands PTE when it was formed 55 years ago.

Today's business also gives many of its buses children's names and, true to the original, the model carries the name *Abigail* on the offside of the rear engine cover. Its authentic 'behind glass' destination display is for route 18 to Yardley Wood.

Two others of these releases show Enviro400 variants operated on Reading Buses' Green Line services to Windsor and Legoland. The liveries are similar, but the vehicles and routes are different.

One shows original style 1208 with London/Windsor/Legoland branding but operating a 703 service from Bracknell to Heathrow T5. Its Select registration replaced its original mark, SN11 BRX. The other depicts Enviro400 MMC 782 with Green Line Express branding, operating a 703 to Bracknell. The real-life vehicle is 11.5m long, but the casting is for the 10.9m version. Fine detail includes high-backed seats on 782.

Completing the line-up is Brighton & Hove 301, a dual-door 10.3m Enviro400ER MMC, the electric range hybrid designed to operate in zero-emission mode through central Brighton. These vehicles introduced the new teal look to the fleet in place of traditional red and cream, with Live & Breathe branding in this case for route 5. It is shown operating a 5A to Patcham and, like the real vehicle, is named *Carol Barnes* in memory of the former ITN newsreader who lived in Brighton.

Eleven more variants of these models are scheduled to appear during 2025. The original style castings will be of Stagecoach vehicles in Greater Manchester Transport and GMS Buses orange heritage liveries and an East Scotland bus in local livery. Five of the eight MMCs will also depict Stagecoach buses, three of them in heritage liveries (Hampshire Bus red and blue, Newcastle Busways yellow, white and maroon and East London Ambassador red and white), one each in Bee Network yellow and Coastliner livery.

Two of the other three are McGill's liveries — Midland Bluebird Unilink and Xplore Dundee — while an East Yorkshire bus will represent Go-Ahead. **AM**

Vehicle:	National Express West Midlands Alexander Dennis Enviro400 4722 (BU07 LGY)
Serial number:	ukbus 6205
Vehicle:	Reading Buses Green Line Alexander Dennis Enviro400 1208 (GO11 LDN)
Serial number	ukbus 6206
Vehicle:	Reading Buses Green Line Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 782 (SN66 WRD)
Serial number:	ukbus 0074
Vehicle:	Brighton & Hove Alexander Dennis Enviro400ER MMC 301 (YX69 NVL)
Serial number:	ukbus 6533
Manufacturer:	Northcord Model Company
Scale:	1:76
Guide price:	£60

London Windsor Legoland
greenline

greenline
LEGOLAND
Heathrow

Patcham 5A
BE THE CHANGE
LIVE & BREATHE

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The combined print and digital average sale for the period January to December 2021 was 10, 752

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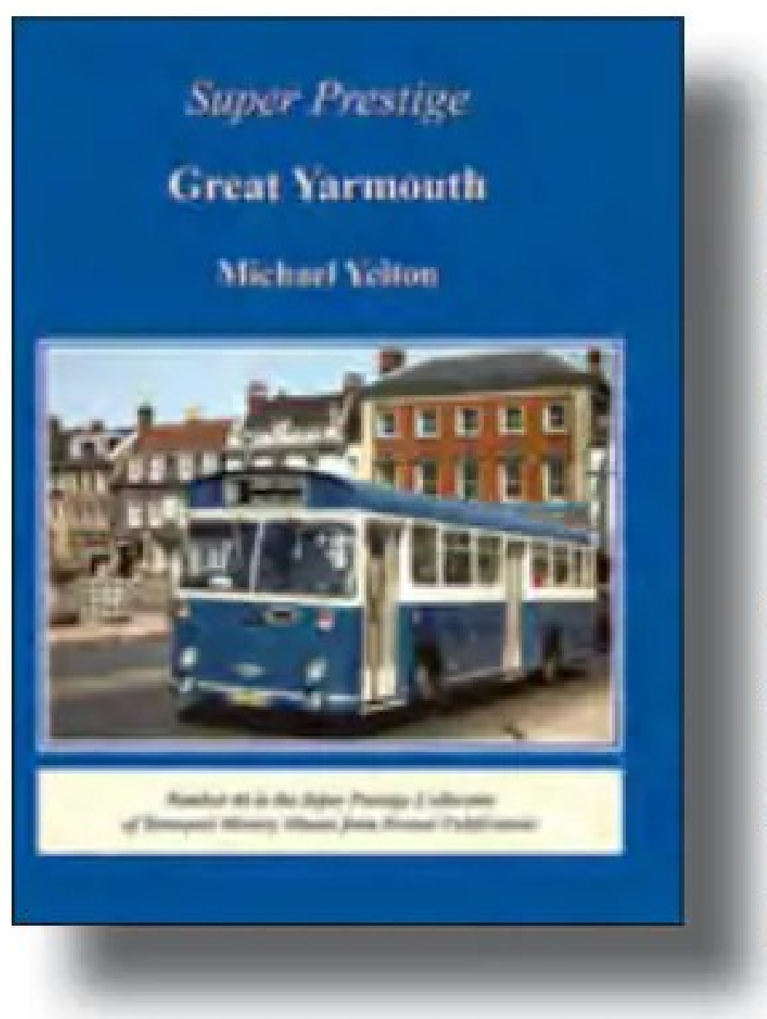
DUE DECEMBER

Super Prestige 46 Great Yarmouth


Super Prestige
Great Yarmouth
Michael Yelton

Municipal transport in Great Yarmouth was a feature of the town for many years, and this new book covers horse trams, electric trams, and then buses, continuing until the formation in 1986 of a limited company. Yarmouth had an unusual history with a number of strong-minded General Managers, including the idiosyncratic Geoffrey Hilditch, who pulled the purchasing policy in different directions. It also had to cope with the vast fluctuations between traffic in the summer and in the winter, and had other peculiar features including special services during the herring season. Its fleet in later years was varied, until it was standardised on the AEC Swift, which proved much more successful here than in many places. Thoroughly researched, with photos and also maps showing the development of the system. VPL67 £20

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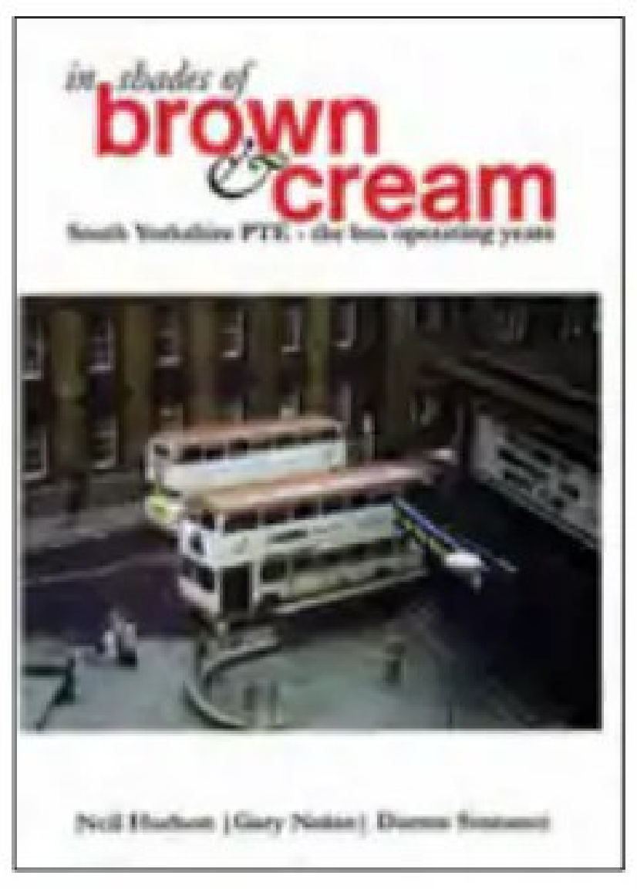
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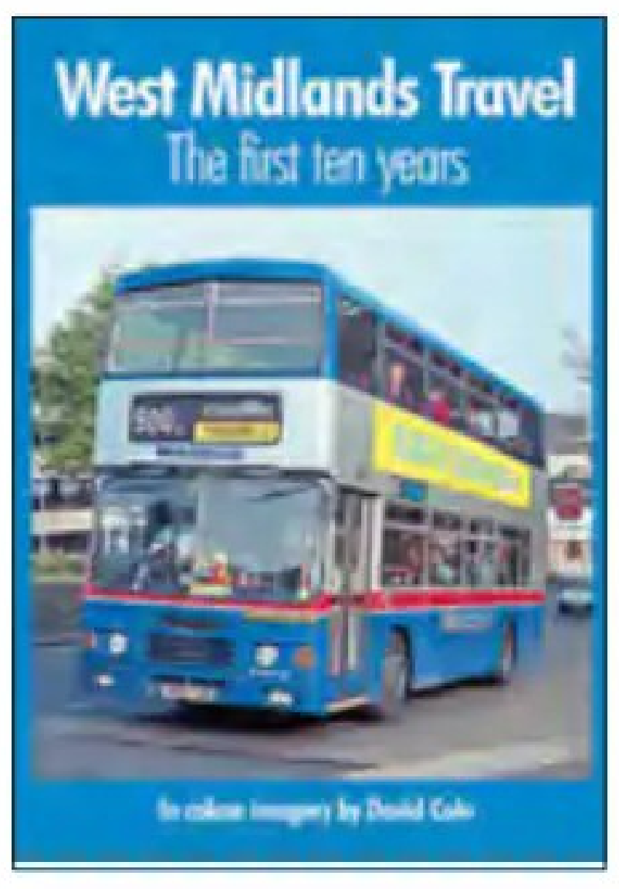
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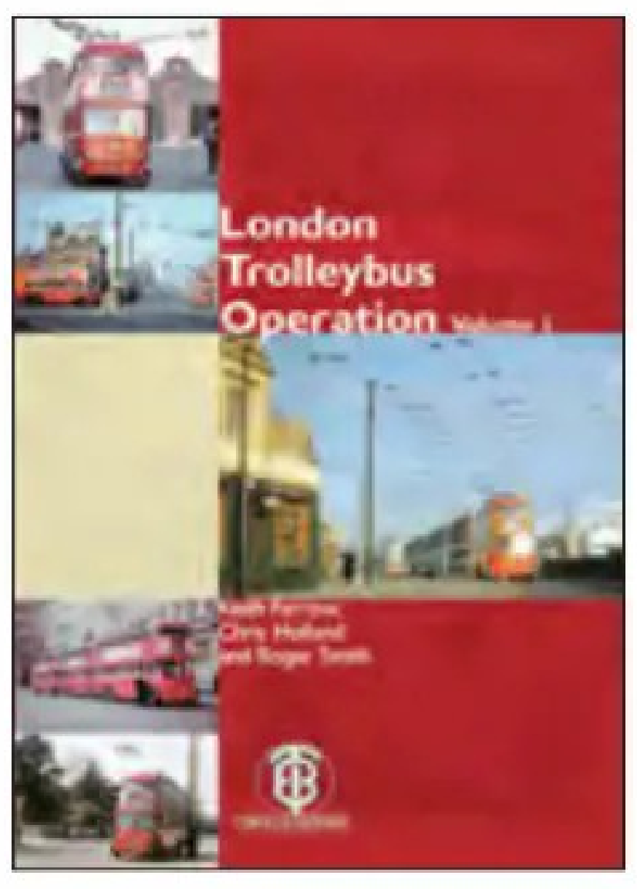
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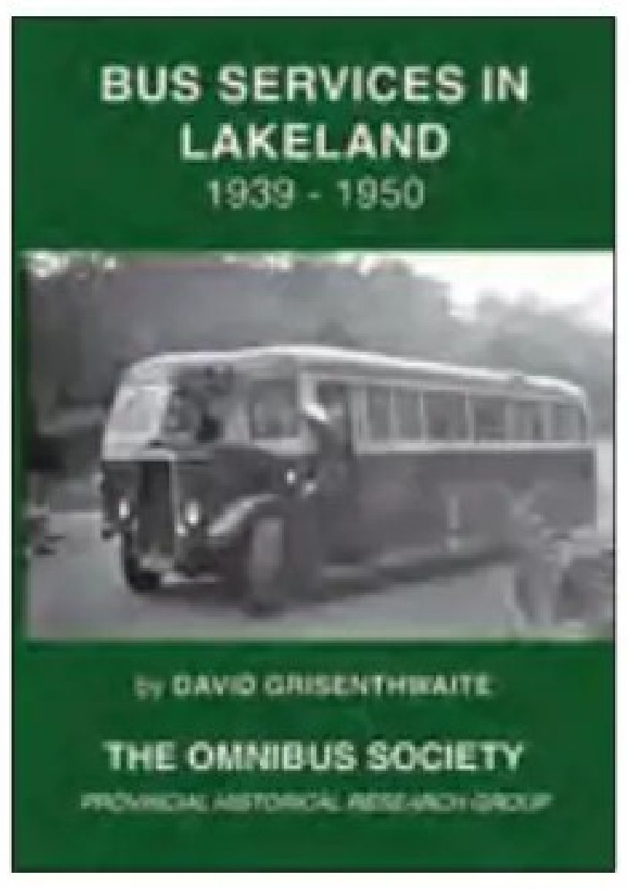
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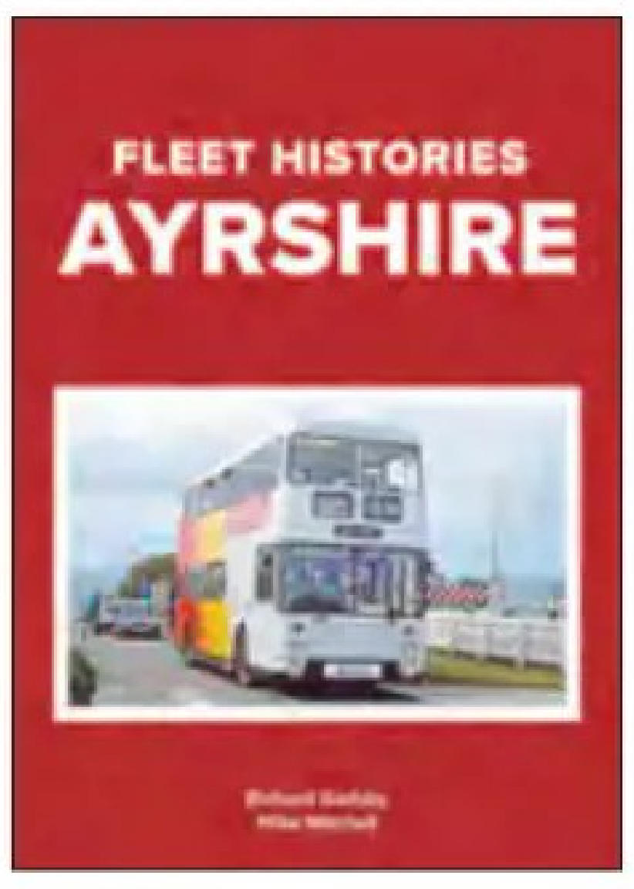
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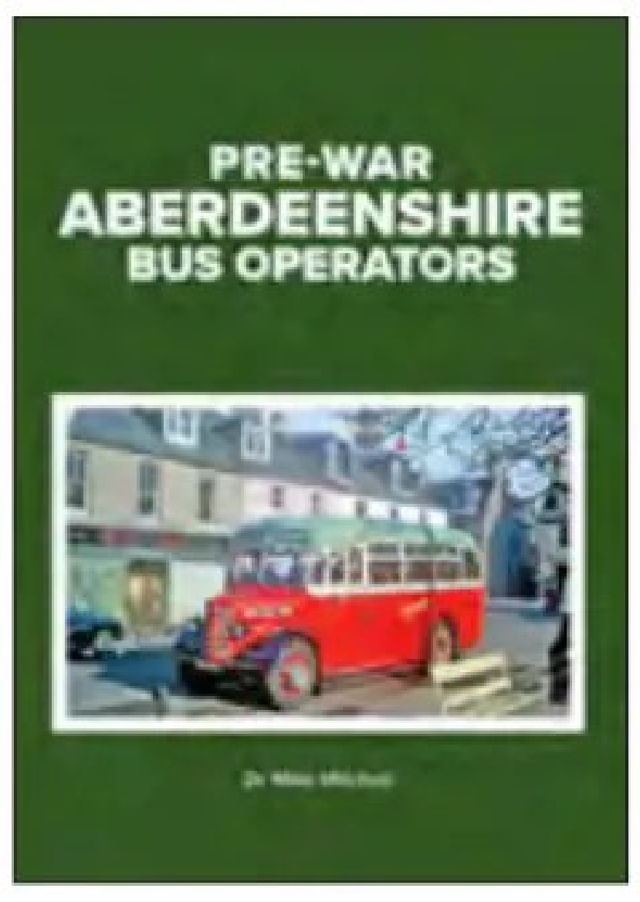
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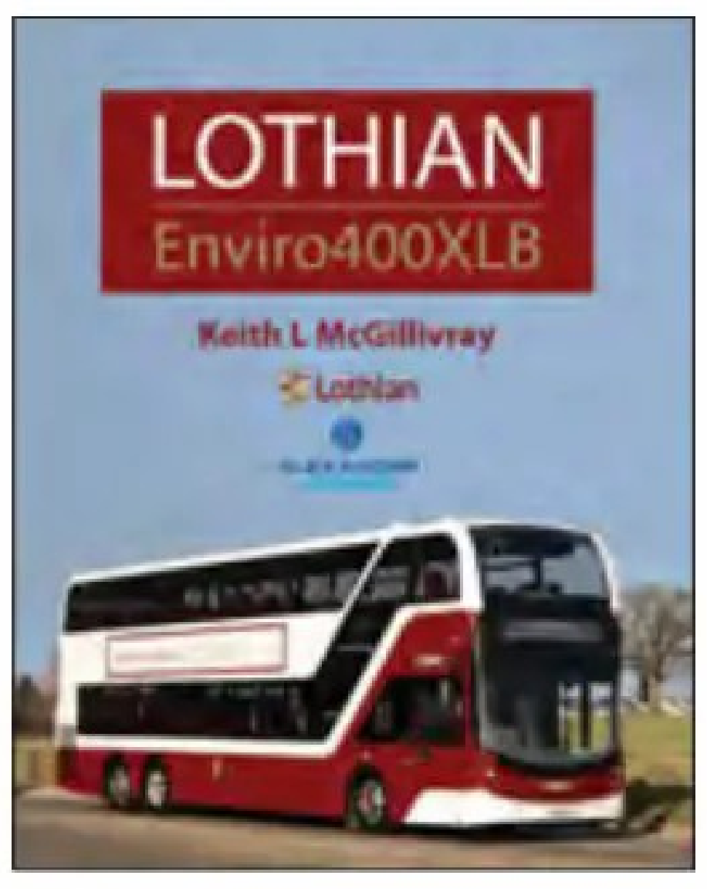
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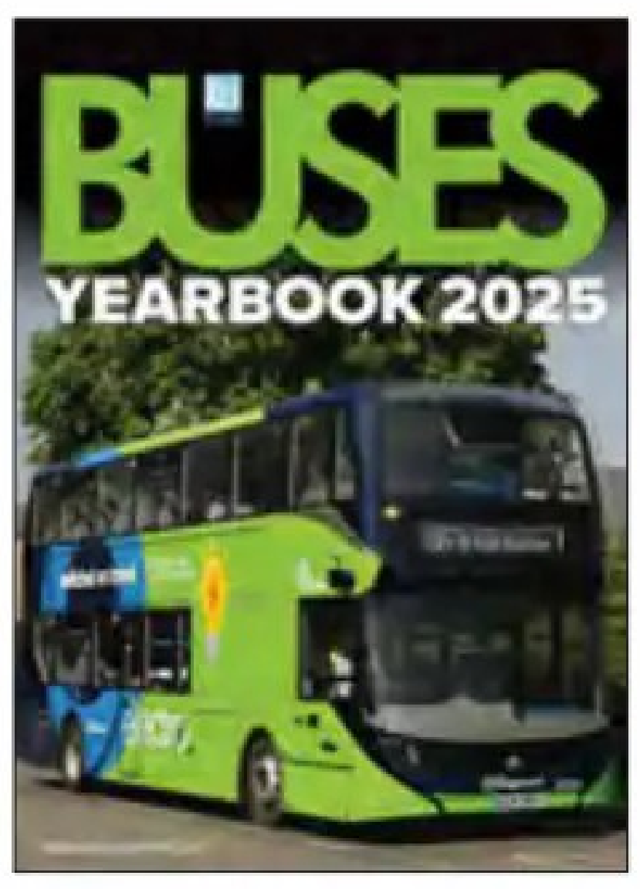
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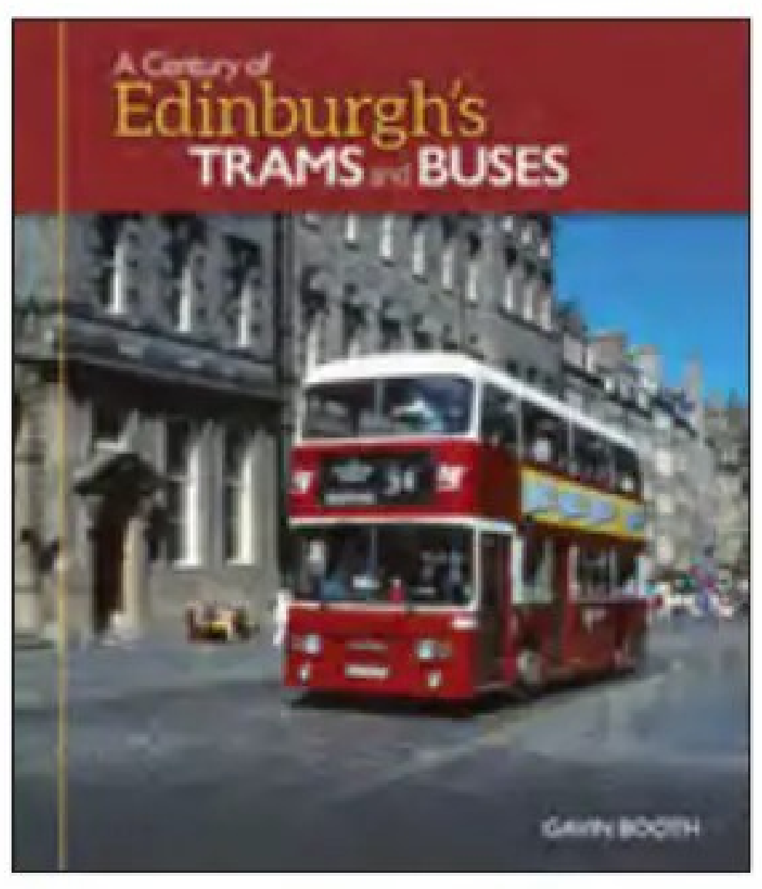
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